TWELVE YEARS'

MILITARY ADVENTURE

IN THREE QUARTERS OF THE GLOBE:

OR,

MEMOIRS OF AN OFFICER

WHO SERVED IN THE

ARMIES OF HIS MAJESTY AND OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY,

BETWEEN THE YEARS 1802 AND 1814,

IN WHICH ARE CONTAINED THE

CAMPAIGNS OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON

IN INDIA,

AND HIS LAST IN SPAIN AND THE SOUTH OF FRANCE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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TO HIS GRACE

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON,

&c. &c. &c.

MY LORD DUKE,

THERE is no one to whom I can, with so much propriety, dedicate these Memoirs, as your Grace; first, as being the most distinguished ornament of the Profession to which I belong; and next, because I began and ended my Military career under your Grace.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord Duke,

Your Grace's most obedient

and most faithful servant,

THE AUTHOR

ADVERTISEMENT.

As in the composition of the following Memoirs the Author has borrowed no aid from fiction, he trusts that the matter will make up for the manner; and, while he craves the indulgence of the learned Reader, he hopes to obtain the mercy of the Critic for the work of an unlettered Soldier.

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TWELVE YEARS'

MILITARY ADVENTURE.

CHAPTER I.

The Author is destined at an early age for the Military Profession. Remarks on professional indications.—A Commission procured for him at the age of nine years.—His feelings on that occasion. Its effects on his character.—He is obliged to retire on Half-pay.—Is sent to Winchester School.—System of Education there; not adapted to slow boys.—Emblematical Device on the wall of the school room.—Author chooses the second alternative.—Is appointed a Cadet in the East India Company's service.—Is sent to the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich.—Commendable system pursued there.—Leaves Woolwich, and prepares for departure for India.

Out of a family of six boys it was proper that one should be devoted to the infernal gods; and, as my shoulders promised to be of the requisite breadth, and my head of the suitable thickness, I was chosen as a fit offering; or, in other words, I was selected for the military profession, as being the greatest dunce in the family. But, besides the above natural qualification for this knock-my-head profession, I must say that I was early seized with the red-coat mania, first caught, I believe, by accompanying a cousin when he went to mount guard at the castle of Dublin, and afterwards evinced in a predilection for painting soldiers on cards, and putting them through their manœuvres on the table, in preference to any evolutions, however beautiful, which could be performed by the six-and-twenty letters of the alphabet. I also well recollect, that among the sons of my father's tenants I had a corps raised and disciplined after

my own manner, which they used to call my ragged regiment. Whether these early professional indications are to be depended upon I know not; but I have no doubt my parents acted upon them in some degree; for one of my brothers was expressly fixed upon as the sailor of the family, because he was observed one day, through the key-hole of a room into which he had locked himself, busily employed in yo-hoing a table, which he had turned upside down for a ship; and another was afterwards entered on the books of the Master-general of the Ordnance for the artillery, because he used to spend all his pocket-money in buying little brass cannons, and firing them off, to the annoyance of my mother's nerves. Had the opinions of the learned Doctors Gall and Spurzheim been then promulgated to the world, my parents would have had a comparatively easy task in the choice of professions for their children; for they would, in that case, only have had to ascertain the prominent bump in the cranium of each boy. As it was, they acted up to the best of their lights; and whether they judged rightly with regard to me, that is, whether I do really possess the bump military, or murderous bump, which I conceive to be the same thing, will perhaps, be discovered in the following memoirs.

With a view of getting me a good start in my profession, a commission was purchased for me in a newly-raised regiment, it being intended, through the means of my maternal uncle, who commanded the corps, to have me kept on the strength until I had completed the usual quantum of education to capacitate me for joining a marching regiment. I never shall forget the feelings with which, at nine years' old, I learned that I had the honour of bearing his Majesty's commission. I am convinced, to this day, that I grew some inches taller in the course of the first twenty-four hours; and to this early event in my life, I have no doubt, I owe a certain stiffness of carriage and military strut, for which I have always been remarkable; and to the tenor communicated by it to my ideas may be attributed much of my present character, the predominant features of which

are pride and a too exquisite, if not a morbid, sense of honour—qualities which I have found to stand in my way in my progress through life. Indeed it was not long before I began to find the feelings resulting from them rather inconvenient; for if, in my juvenile days, I had to resent plebeian insolence (to which my disposition rendered me peculiarly sensitive,) I used to think it beneath me to employ any other than the lowest member of my frame; so that frequently, while I was engaged in kicking the insensible breech of some base-born varlet, he was perhaps exercising his horny knuckles in a more effectual way on my patrician sconce, which, although I was no bad bruiser among my equals in rank, my military pride would hardly allow me to protect with my hands, for fear of being caught in a boxing-match with a snob.

That this early intimation of my being actually an officer did not serve to stimulate me in my studies, may also be easily conceived; for, besides that I had no occasion, like other boys, to study for a profession which I had already attained, I could in no way discover of what use either *musa* or *musæ* could be to me as a soldier.

While in this mood the Duke of York's regulations, prohibiting school-boys from holding commissions in the army came out; and my military pride was lowered a peg or two by my being placed on half-pay. But the mischief was done, and thenceforth I was good for nothing but to wear a cockade.

My parents, however, wisely considering of what use it would be to me in my profession (as I have since experienced,) had taken great pains to have me well instructed in French; for which purpose an Abbé resided constantly in our house during the holidays; so that at the age of thirteen, I not only spoke the language fluently, but understood it well. Whether my head was so peculiarly constructed that it could not contain more than a certain quantum of learning at a time, or whether this principle is common to the human head generally, I shall not stop to inquire; but the fact is, that, though I

had been by this time for some years at a grammar-school, I knew scarcely any thing of the classics.

In this state I was sent as a Commoner to Winchester School, where of course I distinguished myself in the way that might have been expected; that is, by being almost always at the bottom of my class. Not but that an occasional flash of genius, or lucky hit (if you will have it,) would give me a momentary projection to the top; but, alas! only to sink again, like other heavy bodies, to the level from which I had sprung. The "Lose three places"—"Lose three more"—"Go to the bottom"—of Dr. Gabell, still resounds in my ears. But indeed he was the worst master that could be imagined for a slow boy. He never would lend him a helping hand, but down he would keep him, loading him with impositions (that is, tasks) till he had no time to get through either these or his lessons. He went to work like an unskilful huntsman, who, when the hounds come to a fault, will neither allow them to make their own cast, nor give them a lift in a cold scent, but will keep them with their noses down to the foiled ground till the scent is lost altogether. I have been kept on a holiday, with a few other victims of his mistaken discipline, for hours together writing impositions on his staircase, on a cold winter's day, till the pen would drop out of my fingers. Had it not been for the under-master, I think I should have liked the school; for there was a manly—I may say gentlemanly—feeling among the boys, and a degree of liberty was allowed to the commoners out of school hours, which suited my disposition.

A circumstance happened here which will, in some measure, help to elucidate my character. It was usual at the close of the year to move the boys into the class next above them, excepting perhaps one or two who were not considered worthy of the step. On the publication of the classes for the ensuing year, I found myself, as might have been expected, among the few exceptions above-mentioned. For the first time in my life I felt ashamed of being a blockhead, and resolved by an effort to extricate myself, if possible, from my ignomi-

nious state. With this determination I studiously concealed from my parents the disgrace I had undergone; and, when the vacation was over, went and stood up with the class above me, as if I had been regularly promoted to it among the others. I kept my secret close, and put on so good a face, that nobody questioned my right to be there; and I actually continued to keep my place in that class, while my less adventurous companions in disgrace remained in the class below.

Most of my readers must know, or have heard of, the emblematical device which is painted on the wall of Winchester school-room. At top is a mitre and crozier with the words *aut disce* under them; beneath that a sword and an ink-horn, with the words *aut discede*; lastly, a rod, with the remainder of the verse, *manet sors tertia, cædi.* It was my lot to follow the middle course, and to take my departure, not however before I had received such a disproportionate share of the apple twigs* that I could easily distinguish, by the touch of the wood alone, all the gradations from a golden pippin to a codling.

When I had nearly reached my fifteenth year an alteration was made in the plan of my future life, and a cadetship for the artillery or engineers in the East India Company's service was accepted for me. As the situation was in great request, and one in which, to all appearance, an ample harvest of laurels and of lucre was to be reaped; and as the army of the King was then at rather a low ebb, I cannot blame my parents for the part they took; though it is almost certain that, had I continued in the service of his Majesty, I should now be very near the rank of general officer, instead of being a simple Captain. But they acted for the best, and with no motive but my good. Indeed it is but a poor tribute to their parental affection to say, that never were parents more devoted to the welfare of their children than mine. Although nothing could be closer than the union of their

* At Winchester school four apple twigs tied to the end of a stick are used instead of the usual instrument of castigation, a birch rod.

hearts, every child (and they had not a few) seemed an additional link in the bond of their love. These formed so many points of union for their thoughts and affections, and many a luxury was denied themselves that more might be expended on the education of their offspring. It was no fault of theirs if I did not profit by it.

In order to prepare me for the situation I had accepted it was necessary that I should be placed at the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, where cadets for the East India Company's artillery or engineers were then received on the same footing as those of his Majesty; but, as there was no vacancy just at that time, I was sent to an academy at Deptford, where I spent six months pleasantly enough, but learning only what I had afterwards to unlearn.

The system of education at Woolwich was such as exactly suited my disposition. There were no compulsory lessons; but the obtaining a commission depended entirely on a youth's own exertions, and the more rapid his progress the sooner that object was attained. Thus interest was the self-apparent motive, and emulation the spur to action, while nothing like a dread of punishment galled the better feelings, or drew forth the worst passions of our nature. Although supplied with the best masters in each department of instruction, the pupils were free to learn or not, as they chose; but the consequences were obvious, natural, and certain. Indeed, I have often wondered that this principle is not more acted upon in our public schools; for, surely, after a certain age, youth is capable of judging what is for its interest in so plain a case, and more likely to consult that interest through the exertion of free will, than when goaded on by the arm of power, on which the mind will then naturally throw all the trouble and responsibility of pushing it on, while it thinks only of indulging, as much as possible, its natural propensity to idleness and pleasure. Besides forwarding the immediate object in view, I am of opinion that this plan of free agency in education must tend to imbue the mind with early notions of independence and self-confidence, both most essential qualities in

the formation of a great character. Be this as it may, the system suited me; and the fruits were such that, although a dunce at Winchester, I passed through the academy at Woolwich in a shorter time than any of my predecessors, and that without any great exertion of intellect. It might have been that I had more taste for mathematics than for the classics; but still this will not by any means account for the entire revolution which took place in my habits of application. The effect which success in my studies had upon me was striking to myself as well as to others. I believe my friends had given me up as an incorrigible blockhead, and it is not to be wondered at if, in spite of self-love and vanity, I was myself borne away by the notion that my talents were far below mediocrity. But I seemed at once to be born into a better state of existence, and to take my place among a superior order of beings to that in which I had already begun to class myself. I may here remark, that, although I got on extremely well in my mathematical studies (which, however, owing to the demand for officers to fill the engineer and artillery corps, did not then extend to the higher mathematics,) I cannot assert that I then fairly comprehended much of what I learned by rote. On leaving Woolwich I was only between sixteen and seventeen. Whether at this age the mind, in general, is capable of grappling with the mathematics I know not; but I am convinced that in my case it was not, for, on taking up those studies afterwards, at a more mature age, I was surprised at the facility with which I comprehended problems which I recollected to have puzzled me much when I first attempted them. My course being completed at Woolwich, I took my departure duly qualified and empowered to kill, upon the most approved principles of the art, such of my fellow-creatures beyond the Cape of Good Hope as should presume to dispute the authority of the United Company of Merchants of Great Britain trading to the East Indies. In the interval allowed me to prepare for sailing, I retired to spend a few months in the bosom of my family, from which I was so soon to be separated, and which I was doomed never to

see re-united in this sublunary state. This time was not lost by my anxious parents; for, while they lavished their caresses on their departing son, they failed not to pour into my mind all the treasures of their own—treasures, alas! too pure to find a resting-place in a breast flushed with all the feelings and passions of youth. But, if the good seed, thus sown, failed to take root at the moment, yet it remained, without my being conscious of it, in the recesses of my heart, to spring up and bear fruit, when, in after-life, adversity had moistened and prepared the soil; and, if I have not done credit to their precepts and example, I have always, I may safely say, in the wayward and devious path of life, looked back with the deepest reverence, affection, and gratitude, to the authors of my being and the tutors of my heart. Still my father, though the best of parents and of men, had seen too little of the world to be able to warn me of the shoals and rocks that awaited me. He had married early in life, and had seen but little of its vices or its follies. But, indeed, it is a delicate task for a parent to undertake—that of counselling a son about to be thrown upon the wide world. To be of decided use, he must particularize; and, by particularizing, he descends, as it were, from the sanctity of his station, in betraying an acquaintance with scenes and subjects which, to have known, he must have participated in.

CHAPTER II.

The Author embarks for India.---His feelings on that occasion.---His fellow passengers.---Mode of passing time on board.---Trick played on a passenger.---Voyage and arrival at Madras.

In January 1802 I embarked for India, having then nearly completed my seventeenth year, and still retaining my half-pay in his Majesty's service. None but those who have possessed such a home as mine, from which they have been parted under similar circum-

stances, can appreciate my emotions at the separation. For some time previously to this, (to my shame I confess it,) a kind of unhallowed feeling of pride at the prospect of being my own master would occasionally intrude itself among my thoughts; but when the moment of parting approached—that moment which was to separate me, perhaps for ever, from all I held dear on earth, parents! brothers! friends!—every selfish thought gave way before the flood of tenderness which overpowered me, and every faculty of my mind and heart was absorbed in that last, last adieu! As my foot left its last impression on the sand, it seemed to me as if my heart-strings were torn asunder. A vacant, breathless isolation of soul came over me, as I took a last look at the cherished objects of my heart. Mine was not a gradual weaning from the parental fold; I was at once embarked on the ocean of life, at an age when the reins of paternal authority are seldom even relaxed. All that I had clung to for support and protection; all that I had ever loved, or that had ever loved me; all that I knew, or that knew me; in a word, all that I cared for, or that cared for me, seemed to sink from my sight with the lessening cliffs of my native land. The past, as if in mockery of my woe, freshened up in colours brighter than reality, while the future appeared to my view as the dreary waste of waters before me. If to the above description you add the horrors of sea-sickness (which is of itself enough to make a man wish himself at the bottom of the deep,) some faint idea may be formed of the sufferings of many of those striplings annually transported from their native soil, to waste their youth and bloom in an ungenial clime, perhaps to whiten with their bones a hostile land, or, if destined to return, to return, alas! but spectres of their former selves.

But, to return to my own story. The elasticity of youth prevented me from long remaining in this state, and I began to recover my spirits about the same time that my stomach began to recover its tone; that is, as soon as we had crossed that capacious receptacle for At-

lantic waves and contents of landsmen's stomachs, the Bay of Biscay.

From a parent's fireside to a cuddy-table—from a family circle to a mixed company of strangers, the transition is not slight; and this I fully experienced. The nature of the society into which a youth falls on first embarking in life, is a matter of more consequence than is generally supposed. Indeed, I consider that much of the tone of his future life may depend upon it. I mean, not the association of youth with youth—for they look to each other, not for example, but companionship—but of such a mixture of ages as is commonly met with in society. If, among those to whom he will naturally look up, he finds right principles and respectable conduct, happy is it for him: but if, on the contrary, he falls into company with the confirmed libertine, the hoary sensualist, or the unprincipled gamester, that youth must possess a strong bias who can escape the contagion. I abhor the man who can blast the polish of the youthful heart with his obscene breath. Youth has passions enough, God knows, to excite it to sin, without its receiving the helping hand of experienced vice; yet have I seen those who would not be content unless they could drag others into the vortex after them. One such I fell in with on my outset in life; but, happily, I have only to remember him with disgust.

The generality of our society on board was respectable, and some of its members were men of education and talent. Excepting that there was no lady of the party, it was composed of the usual materials to be found at the cuddy-table of an outward bound Indiaman. First, there was a puisne judge, intrenched in all the dignity of a dispenser of law to his majesty's loving subjects beyond the Cape, with a *Don't tell me* kind of face, a magisterial air, and dictatorial manner, ever more ready to lay down the law, than to lay down the lawyer. Then, there was a general officer appointed to the staff in India, in consideration of his services on Wimbledon Common and at the Horse Guards, proceeding to teach the art military to the Indian army—a man of gentlemanly

but rather pompous manners; who, considering his simple nod equivalent to the bows of half a dozen subordinates, could never swallow a glass of wine at dinner without lumping at least that number of officers or civilians in the invitation to join him, while his aid-de-camp practised the same airs among the cadets. Then, there was a proportion of civilians and Indian officers returning from furlough or sick certificate, with patched-up livers, and lank countenances, from which two winters of their native climate had extracted only just sufficient sun-beams to leave them of a dirty lemon colour. Next, there were a few officers belonging to detachments of king's troops proceeding to join their regiments in India, looking, of course, with some degree of contempt on their brethren in arms, whose rank was bounded by the longitude of the Cape; but condescending to patronize some of the most gentlemanly of the cadets. These, with a free mariner, and no inconsiderable sprinkling of writers, cadets, and assistant-surgeons, together with the officers of the ship, who dined at the captain's table, formed a party of about twenty-five.

Of the above heterogeneous mass, the majority, as may be conjectured, were *ultra-Tweeders*, a people who, with souls too big for their native land, claim the privilege of levying contributions on all the world, and of securing a Benjamin's portion of the loaves and fishes, in whatever region they are to be found. To counterbalance these, there was but one Irishman. Och! and that was enough! another like him would have been the death of us (as Matthews says;) for he kept the cuddy-table in a roar throughout the voyage. Then we had one or two of your rattling, noisy, good-humoured, never-look-in-a-book chaps, such as, without a spark of imagination or wit, but with the most unprovokable and provoking good temper, joined to an inexhaustible fund of *animal* spirits, pass in the world for extremely pleasant fellows; but who, in my opinion, are the greatest plagues in existence. We could boast, also, of professed practical jokers, dry matter-of-facters, punsters, prosers, and ever-

ready laughers; but, what was better than all, a few good listeners.

Nor was our society without its Bobadil; and many a marvellous tale of tigers, elephants, Cobra de Capellos, Mysoreans, Mahrattas, fire-eaters, and sword-eaters, have we youngsters listened to with open mouths, till repetition had rendered them too stale even for a sea stomach. That there were some sensible well-informed men among so many may be supposed; and that there was a black sheep or two in the flock cannot be denied. One of the latter was a most plausible, smooth-tongued hypocrite, and the other the most impudent cut-and-come-again fellow I ever encountered. Happily for us, however, two things were wanting. There was neither a mischief-maker, nor a professed duellist, so that we contrived to get to the end of our voyage without there being any balance on the score of honour to be settled with powder and ball. Alas! of these my first companions in the voyage of life, above three-fourths are already gone to their long homes; some have died a soldier's *natural* death on the field of battle; some have fallen victims to the climate; some few still toil on their way; some few, like myself, have preferred poverty with half a liver to riches without any; and some few, and those few indeed! have gained the object of their ambition—a fortune; but not one, perhaps with health to enjoy it, or the sense to know how to spend it.

I shall not dwell upon the manner in which we passed our time on board ship—how we panted under the Line—how we rolled round the Cape, frequently with more soup in our laps than we could keep on our stomachs—how the back gammon-board rattled from morning till night—how we paced the quarter-deck, when the judge and general did not take it all to themselves—how we fished for sharks—how we speared dolphins, porpoises, and albacores;—nor shall I attempt to paint the pictured agonies of the dying dolphins, already so beautifully described by Falconer; nor the nobler and more potent struggles of the greedy, daring shark, to do justice to which would require the pen of a Homer. Neither shall I swell my

pages with an account of the visit we received from Father Neptune on crossing the Line, with the ceremonial attending it, as that subject is stale; nor detail all the jokes, practical and verbal, which we played upon each other, except one of the former; and if it amuses the reader half as much as it did me, I shall be content. There was a lazy fat fellow amongst us, who was always lolling or sleeping on the hen-coops, upon whom we resolved to play a trick: so, seizing an opportunity when he was snug on his customary roost, we planted ourselves, with buckets of water, just over him. At a signal given, he was jerked off the coop, and soused from head to foot with such a full and successive torrent of the briny fluid, accompanied by a cry of, "Man overboard! Rope! rope! Down with the helm!" &c. that he actually struck out as if swimming for his life; till a failure in the supply of water, succeeded by peals of laughter, brought him to a sense of his situation.

The captain of our ship was a gentlemanly, liberal man, and did every thing in his power to render us comfortable. He kept a good table, and seldom took advantage of a gale of wind to put us off with a sea-pie. For my part, my father having stipulated that I should be provided with a cabin to myself, and having supplied me with abundance of books, my time was passed both pleasantly and profitably. Having had somewhat of a mathematical education, I frequently exercised myself in taking celestial observations with the officers of the ship, those of the East India Company's service being considered, of all others, the best navigators, although, from their being almost always in the open seas, their merit as seamen may not be equally great. We touched at Madeira just long enough for the captain to lay in his stock of London particular; had upon the whole a good passage, nothing, that I can recollect having occurred beyond what is common in similar voyages, and cast anchor in Madras Roads in less than five months after we quitted England.

CHAPTER III.

Appearance of Madras.—Landing.—Assailed by swarms of Native Servants.—Amusements of Sailors ashore.—Author repairs to the Fort to deliver his credentials.—Remarks on entering the Fortress.—Reception at the Adjutant-general's office.—Return to the Hotel, and description of it.—Musquitoes.—Anecdote of a young lady.—Returns to the ship in search of his baggage.—Extortion of the Massuli-boat boys.—Delivers his letters of introduction.—Is invited to the house of the Chief Engineer.—Chooses the Engineer Corps.—Removes to quarters in the Fort.—Society of the Presidency.—Anecdote of a Scotch Cadet.—Public day at a Regimental Mess.

The most dreary spot in existence will always appear delightful to the eye fatigued with long gazing on the same object. Any novelty must be charming to the mind wearied with a constant repetition of the same scenes; any exercise must be refreshing to the body long pent up within narrow limits. It is not, then, a matter of surprise that almost all navigators should paint the spot at which they first touch after a long voyage, more in the colours of imagination, than in those of reality; as the *el dorado* of their ideas. Indeed it must require all this, and more, to describe the approach to the coast of Coromandel as any thing strikingly beautiful. A few straggling cocoa-nut trees, rising out of the haze of a tropical horizon, are all that at first strikes the eye, till a closer approximation shows a low line of coast, backed at a considerable distance by a range of mountains of no great height. But, when you have approached sufficiently near to distinguish the buildings of Madras, with Saint Thomas' mount in the back-ground, the *coup d'œil*, may be pronounced, if not grand, at least novel and pleasing.

Of catamarans, massuli-boats, &c. &c. I shall not attempt to give any description, as those subjects have

long since been exhausted; but, assuming that the reader is as much tired of the sea as I was, I shall e'en jump over surf and all, and carry him ashore as fast as I can. My feelings on landing I need not describe. They were, of course, not such as I should have experienced at setting foot on my native soil; but still they were far from unpleasing. A new world was before me; and a pocket full of letters of introduction was all I had to supply the place of home, parents, and friends. But hope, the morning star of life, shone on my path, and that was enough to cheer the prospect.

The swarm of natives who assail you on landing, with testimonials of character, as fair as had once been the paper on which they were written, each endeavouring to fix himself upon you as your *dubash* or factotum, and actually quarrelling like vultures for their prey, would give him who judges by the surface of things but an unfavourable opinion of the people among whom it is his lot to be thrown. Breaking our way through the crowd, I, and two or three of my shipmates threw ourselves into palanquins, and desired one of these officious gentlemen to show us to an hotel. Proceeding thither, in this, to us, novel conveyançe, we were nearly run over by a couple of drunken tars in a gig, who hiccuped out their excuses with a "Please your honour she won't steer." We also encountered two or three more of the same amphibious animals (for there was a man of war in the roads,) jaunting about in palanquins, with a leg out of the door on either side, each attended by his dubash, who acted in the triple capacity of purse-bearer, guide, and mercury. Heedless wretches! who think to make up, by an hour's dissipation and extravagance, for months of slavery and privation.

Having partaken of a luncheon (called *tiffin* in India,) consisting of mullagatawny and grilled chicken, we set off on foot to the Fort, to deliver our credentials. One of those fine sun-shiny mornings which are occasionally experienced in India, (i. e. about three hundred and fifty days in the twelve months,)—a delightful westerly breeze, loaded with the refreshing warmth of one hundred miles

of flat country (called a land-wind,) and a dry yellow soil, which, while it reflected the brilliant rays of the sun, sent their genial heat even through the soles of our shoes—rendered our walk across the esplanade such as cannot be described, nor even imagined, unless by one who has enjoyed the promenade under a similar combination of delightful circumstances. On entering Fort St. George, which being built on the best principles of the art, may be considered as a very strong place, I was not a little struck with the succession of outworks and draw-bridges, and the number of angular walls and deep moats which we had to pass, and to which I had never before seen any thing similar, although it was all familiar to me on paper. Then there was the stiff sentry meeting you at every turn, and the stiff guard drawn out to salute the stiff general. In short, every thing within the garrison had an air of rigidity about it, which, though it might add to the "pomp and circumstance of war," could not awaken any very pleasurable sensations, or excite any flattering anticipation, in those who felt that they were soon to become the objects, if not the victims, of its discipline. Strange! thought I, that there should be so much greater a display of military parade in the establishment of a company of merchants, than ever I have witnessed in any garrison belonging to his Britannic Majesty in England! I did not stop to consider, that the difference arose, not in the constitution of their military bodies, but in the situation in which they acted; the one as members of a free country, the other as tools of a despotic government.

The effect thus produced on our minds was not at all lessened on entering the adjutant-general's office, where, characteristically encased in a bomb-proof, on the sea face of the fort, sate this awful functionary and his deputies, with their coats buttoned up to their chins, and the thermometer at 90°, in all the stiffness of starch, pipe-clay, pomatum, and importance.

The feelings of awe with which we passed the threshold of this sanctuary of discipline were somewhat relieved by the address of Colonel Agnew, the then adju-

tant-general, who, to considerable talent, joined, when it pleased him, a peculiar suavity of manner, which a letter of introduction drew forth more particularly to myself, and which might have succeeded in setting us a little at our ease, if we had not, at the same time, seen a young officer, who had come into the office on business, roughly reprimanded (India-Anglice *wigged*) by a zealous jack-in-office of a deputy, for presuming to have his neckcloth more than one twelfth of an inch above his stock: which exercise of authority, in apparently so trivial a circumstance, impressed us with a conviction that, however the individual in power might relax, the system was still one foreboding but little comfort to those who had exchanged liberty for a red coat. On taking our leave, we were told that tents would be pitched on the glacis for the reception of the cadets in the course of the evening, and that every thing would be there provided for their accommodation, till forwarded to the Cadet Company, that praiseworthy institution (now very properly done away with,) where boys were kept together to make still greater boys of each other, instead of being sent off to their regiments to be made men of. As I had nothing to do with that concern, I preferred returning to my hotel in the Black Town, and in this perhaps I was wrong, for the place in which I had taken up my quarters proved to be really a *hot hell*, which admirable pun, notwithstanding Mr. Matthews has introduced it in his Trip to America, I have a right to call my own, being able to prove by two credible witnesses, now luckily alive, that the same was uttered by me on this very occasion, full twenty years before the said Mr. Matthews ever crossed the Atlantic. Happily, Indian hospitality prevented the place being frequented by respectable persons; for it was just such a hole as you would suppose a cannibal *gourmand* would select for preparing the livers of such human geese as he intended should supply him with the *materiel* of a *paté de foie gras*. Here I passed the night in a bed which might be called a chop-house for musquitoes, where fresh tender European flesh was regularly served up to them on the arri-

val of a fleet, just as Aldermen are regaled at the City of London Tavern on the landing of a fresh batch of turtle from the West Indies. To be sure, there was some pretence of excluding these voracious animals by what are termed musquito-curtains; but they only served like the walls of the tavern aforesaid, to exclude the vulgar herd, while a set party of old hands, aware of the repast which awaited them, had taken care to secure a berth within. This tormenting insect, happily known by report only in England, is justly an object of dread to all new comers. A young lady from the Highlands of Scotland, having had her imagination worked upon during the voyage by the terrible description given of it by the officers of the ship, who feel a pleasure in hoaxing the *griffins;* and having heard, by some means, that it had a proboscis or trunk, on seeing an elephant near the beach where they landed, exclaimed, as she caught the arm of one of the passengers for protection, "Is that the animal ye caw a muskeetee?"

But to return to myself; what with the incessant efforts of my tormentors, a dry tongue, and a feverish skin, (the consequences of a slight jollification with a party of shipmates the preceding evening,) as may be supposed, I had but little sleep the first night of my arrival. The next morning, after partaking of an Indian breakfast, consisting of fresh fish and green tea, I returned to the ship in quest of my baggage. The massuli-boat boys, guessing that they had a Johnny Newcome (*griffins* they are called in India) to deal with, stopped the boat, apparently in a most dangerous situation, between two of those tremendous surfs, intimating that they would not move an inch if I did not give them a *douceur*; with which piece of extortion, for want of the means of chastising them, and desirous to preserve myself from a ducking, I thought it best to comply. As soon as I had cleared my effects at the Custom-house, and lodged them safely at the tavern, I set off in a palanquin, to present some of my letters of introduction, without which a cadet would as soon think of embarking for India, as a soldier would of going into battle without

ammunition, and of which I had not a few. One of the first I delivered was to Colonel Trapaud, chief engineer, who kindly invited me to take up my abode at his house. Here then I was as comfortable (if that word can possibly be applied to the native of a cold climate under the 12th degree of latitude at the hottest season of the year, suffering from the prickly heat by day, and from musquitoes by night; well then, as much at my ease) as could be expected, in a garden-house about two miles from Fort St. George, in the month of July. My choice of a profession lay between the Engineer and Artillery Corps; and I preferred the former, contrary, I must say, to the advice of by far the greater part of my friends; for the promotion was then very rapid in the artillery, while the engineers were rather at a low ebb. Of this resolution, however, I have had since no cause to repent; for, though in the artillery I should in three years have been a Captain, which rank it took me ten years to attain in the engineers, yet, besides having a *penchant* for the latter service, the nature of the duty gave me a degree of liberty and independence unknown in the other branches of the military profession, while it afforded better opportunities of acquiring a competence—the chief object of every European who adventures beyond the Cape.

Not wishing to be a burthen on my kind host, I removed, shortly after my appointment, to the engineers' quarters in the Fort, which, though they would be called good in English barracks, afforded none of the means of enjoying either comfort or ease in a tropical climate. My military duties, which then only consisted in attending the engineers' office for a few hours in the day to exhibit my talents at plan-drawing, &c. interfered not at all with a full enjoyment of the society of the settlement, to which my numerous letters of introduction procured me access; so that, in passing my evenings, I was luckily not thrown upon my own resources. Not having been of an age to mix much in company before I left England, I had no prejudices or preconceived notions of etiquette, to prevent my embracing society on

its own terms. I did not expect that a member of council, or a general officer, should pay his respects to me before I accepted his hospitality. I regularly paid my court at the breakfast-tables of the great, it being the custom for persons of distinction to hold a kind of levee at that meal; and I was a frequent guest at the houses of almost all the principal inhabitants, civil and military; so that, with balls and parties two or three times a week, I passed my time gaily enough. Others, better versed in the forms of high life, or naturally more fastidious, might quarrel with the system of society at Madras; but youth are easily pleased, and may, in my opinion, without any sacrifice of independence, circumstanced as I was, fairly partake of the hospitality of those above them, although it cannot be in their power to return it. Indeed the contrary line of conduct, in my mind, betrays a want of sense. I recollect a young Scotch cadet, who had probably read Macklin's *Man of the World* on the passage out till he had made up his mind not to be a Sir Pertinax, being invited, as usual, on joining his regiment, to breakfast with the commanding officer, replying; "Nay, I thank ye, sar, I've tea and sugar of my ane at hame."

Among other invitations to dinner, I received one from a shipmate, whose regiment, one of his majesty's, formed part of the garrison. It was what is called a public day at the mess, when the members generally ask such of their friends as they please. My military reader will excuse me, if I give a description of it for the amusement of my civil one.

I arrived about seven o'clock, just as the drums were playing "Roast Beef of old England," the regular signal that dinner is dishing. On my entrance, I found most of the officers and some guests assembled in the veranda, which extended along the front of the mess-room, some pacing up and down, and some lolling in chairs with their legs up against the pillars, trying to inhale the last puffs of the sea-breeze which had set in about three or four hours before. The guests were asked to take a glass of wine before dinner, and Madei-

ra was handed round. Soon after, a fat portly native butler, with large ear-rings, announced the dinner, which was spread on a table extending the whole length of a long room, from the ceiling of which depended a punkah. A good display of plate, presented by the House of Assembly of some West India island where the regiment had been stationed, ornamented the board, at which the company were not long in seating themselves. After the usual removes of fish and soup, appeared a tremendous turkey, which, to use a sailor's expression, could easily have hoisted on board a full-sized Norfolk bird of the same species. Opposite to this by no means *rara avis* of a large dinner-party, (for an English club might just as well be without its parson, or a city feast without its turtle, as a public dinner in India without its turkey,) stood its never-failing companion, a huge ham, in point of size as near a match to the bird as the European shops could supply. What the other dishes were I did not particularly notice; but of this we may be pretty certain, that there was a tolerable sprinkling of curry and rice up and down the table. Each person was waited upon by his own servant, who stood behind his master's chair; so that a regular rear rank was formed for the exclusion of the external air; that which was exhaled by the lungs of the party and their betel-mouthed attendants being bandied about from mouth to mouth by the vibrations of the punkah. The work of destruction was not long in commencing, and a tolerably brisk fire was kept up by the front rank sitting, with this difference from the field-day practice, that the rear rank, instead of joining in the fire, only supplied the front rank with ammunition.

If one who had read Bruce's Travels, but had known nothing of the costume of the natives of India, whose long garments resemble those of women in our country, had been suddenly set down at an Indian mess-table, he would actually have supposed himself for a moment to be at the feast of Abyssinians described by that ingenious traveller; with this difference, that the ladies employed in cramming the males, instead of being seated

between them, had taken post behind. The conversation was much as usual at tables where there are no females. Amidst the clatter of knives and forks and plates would now and then be heard, "Mootoo, take my plate for some turkey and ham"—"Bring me the curry and rice, Ramsammy"—"A glass of wine, Hopkins?"—"Will your friend join us?"—"Thompson, we won't make a bridge of your nose"—"Colonel wants take a glass of wine with Master," &c. &c. The dinner passed off as dinners in general do, and I observed nothing particular, except that over the national dish of plum-pudding was emptied a bottle of cherry bounce. The cloth being removed, hookas made their appearance behind the chairs of some of the party—some, I say, for not many officers can afford that expensive appendage, which, besides the cost of the *chelum*, the compound smoked, requires an attendant to itself. A squad of sergeants now entered with the orderly-books of their companies for the inspection of the officers, which drew forth a few "D——n bores!" in *sotto voce*, no doubt in allusion to a drill the next morning. The room being cleared, and the bottles (among which Carbonel in his magnum bonums stood conspicuous) marshalled in their places, the president gave "The Ladies," to which the band stationed in the veranda struck up "Kiss my Lady." Then came "The King," with the national anthem; "The Duke of York and the Army"—Peace to his manes! If the number of glasses of wine which have been swallowed to his health with hearty good will, for the third of a century that he had been commander-in-chief, could have conferred that blessing, he would have lived as long as the king, who, in his constitutional capacity, never dies.—Then followed "The Duke of Clarence and the Navy," with "Rule Britannia;" "The Honourable Company," tune, "Money in both pockets;" "Lord Wellesley;" "Lord Clive;" "Lord Lake and the Army in India;" and so on, through the regular set toasts; when the president rose, and, with the usual premisal of "Off heel-taps, gentlemen," gave, as a bumper toast, "General Baird

and the heroes of Seringapatam." This was drunk standing, and in the three times three which followed, some sighs escaped to the memory of those of the regiment who had fallen on that occasion. Then were given some toasts complimentary to persons present. "General —— and his Majesty's —— regiment;" "Mr. Malony, your good health." Mr. Malony's health was re-echoed along the table, and Mr. Malony bowed, and bowed. "Admiral —— and the squadron in India." Lieut. —— of the Doris returned thanks. "General —— and the Hon. Company's —— regiment of Native Infantry." Major Yellowchaps acknowledged the compliment, and in return gave "General —— and his Majesty's —— regiment," on which the Lieut.-Colonel and officers bowed, and the band struck up the regimental air. The volleys of toasts being now ended, an independent fire was kept up along the table, in the momentary intervals of which might be heard the bubbling of the hooka, while the "Pass the bottle" of the president, "More wine, Mr. Vice," rose occasionally above the buz of conversation, which consisted mostly of "Jenkins of ours, and Tomkins of yours;" till the president, with a rap on the table, commanding silence, begged to call on Captain —— for a song. The Captain, after a few hems, sung a good song in good style, and received the acknowledgments of the company by a general thumping of fists on the table. Captain ——'s health and song having been drunk, and the band having played a tune, whether by way of drowning the cries of the wounded bottles, which poured from their mouths tides of the purple fluid, or to conceal the nonsense that was spoken—for, in the language of Anstey,

> I freely confess that I *claret* preferr'd
> To all the genteel conversation I heard—

I could not ascertain. Captain —— then called on some one else for a song; and so it went on, song, health, and tune, through the evening, till those who could not sing, as well as those who could, were com-

pelled to contribute their quota to the general amusement, either as the causes or the subjects of mirth.

About ten o'clock the Colonel, his guest Major Yellowchaps, and some others, having retired, a few choice spirits closed in on the president, apparently determined to keep it up; previously to which, however, sundry plates of olives, anchovy toast, and deviled biscuit, had disappeared; and now the remains of the turkey made its appearance in the shape of a devil, to stir up a pretty hell in the already inflamed stomachs of the party. After this, in spite of the admonition of "No parish, gentlemen," from the president, who was bound to keep himself sober, regimental matters came under discussion; so, seizing the opportunity of a squabble between the adjutant and a subaltern on the propriety of the latter being returned next for guard, I made my escape, but not without being followed by a volley of "Shabby fellow!" "Milk-sop!" "Cock-tail!" &c. &c. to pass the night in a fever which two *juglets* of water would not allay, and to rise in the morning with a head throbbing like a steam-vessel, and a tongue not a little in need of the most essential article of the Indian toilet.

CHAPTER IV.

Groundless complaints of Officers at not getting into society.—Ladies.—Matrimonial Market.—Author studies the Hindoo religion, assisted by his native servants.—Ladies of India defended against the attacks of Mrs. Grahame.—Indian Fruits.—Author visits the Ceded Districts with a Committee of Survey.—Hill Forts.—Pagoda of Trippety.—Return to the Presidency.—North-east Monsoon.—Tanks.

I know there were many, particularly among the younger branches of the army, who complained that they could not get into society at the Presidency; but I cannot help thinking that the fault was, in some degree, their own. They were either too proud or too idle to seek it. Sullenly shutting themselves up in their barracks, or in

obscure quarters in the Black Town, they expected that men accustomed to have court paid to them for their situations, or engaged in official business, would or could go out of their way to find them out. If at a ball, they would complain of the impossibility of procuring partners; but this they owed chiefly to their want of acqaintance; for I did not observe that the ladies—that is the married ones—gave themselves greater airs in India than elsewhere. In fact, a *mère de famille*, from the scarcity of petticoats, thinks it becomes her to be as gay, if not gayer, than single ladies in England. With a Miss it is quite different; for if her appearance be such as to render her desirable as a partner in a dance, she is also, for the same reason, considered by many as a desirable partner in a more important concern; and, therefore, not likely to be left at liberty to dance with a subaltern, even if she should feel disposed to accept that honour, which is not at all probable. Indeed, the matrimonial market in India is much the same as other markets for live stock, where the best possible price is obtained for the article. The first ball after the arrival of a fleet from Europe may be considered as a kind of fair day, where the new comers of the softer sex are shown off, and where every family that has the advantage of possessing a fresh attraction, whether of its own or consigned to it from the mother country, takes care to appear. The rank or property of the suiter is the price offered for the article; and in estimating this, the gradations from a member of council or general to an ensign or assistant-surgeon are as well understood and as clearly defined as the gradations of the currency from a sovereign to a farthing, or from a gold mohur to a doody; the civil and military branches of the service preserving the same relative value that is assigned to them in the tables of precedency published in the East India Directory.

The system pursued in disposing of the fair objects is exactly the same as that used at the sales of king's stores in a dock-yard, where the auctioneer begins by putting the highest price on the article, and keeps lowering and lowering, till some bidder assents to the price and bears

off the goods. First, the young lady is instructed to set her cap at a civilian high in office, or at an officer high on the staff. If, in the course of a few months, there is no bidding at that price, then she condescends to cast a smile upon the second rank, and so on to the bottom. Should she possess any pretensions to beauty, she is soon snapped up; for the scarcity of the article prevents people from being very fastidious in their tastes. If of the true European white, she is almost sure to go off tolerably well; but no mixture of the Asiatic will suit persons of any rank. Should the young lady continue on hand till the arrival of a fleet conveying a fresh supply of fair ones, she is, of course, thrown somewhat into the background, and her chance of a good match considerably diminished; so it often happens, that females are thus compelled to accept offers which, at first starting, they would have rejected with disdain, and in some instances, to take the very men whom they once treated with scorn. But she must be a hapless virgin, indeed, and possessed of no ordinary *de*tractions, who is compelled, as a *dernier resort*, to put up with an ensign of native infantry, by whom she may be borne off to spend the honey-moon in a hill-fort. How happy marriages in general prove among Europeans in India may hence be inferred.

My parents had desired that I should make myself acquainted with the manners, customs, and religion of the people among whom I was thrown; and, as a proof of my attention to this point, that I would as early as possible, communicate to them the result of my researches. As soon, therefore, as I was sufficiently settled, I set about making the requisite inquiries into the mythology of the Hindoos; in which laudable undertaking I received every assistance from my dubash and maty-boy, both very intelligent men. A visit to two or three places of Hindoo worship in the Black Town, where I was permitted, through the interest of the aforesaid personages, to make sketches of some of the idols, as well as of those ancient structures themselves, contributed to give me a considerable insight into the religion of these interesting people: and I had, in fact, almost completed a succinct

account of the same, with illustrative drawings, when, in the pride of my heart, I showed it to an acquaintance who had been many years in the country, and of whose talents I had a high opinion. Before he had perused half a page, to my utter discomfiture and annoyance, he burst out into a horse laugh, upon which I threw the manuscript into the fire, and was thus cured of my first fit of the *cacoëthes scribendi.* The reader may perhaps add, "It had been as well if the disease had never returned." I cannot help thinking, however, that this ill-timed ridicule of my friend's was the cause of a second Sir William Jones having been lost to the world.

I cannot agree with Mrs. Grahame, in her remarks on the State of Society in India, particularly in her libel on the ladies, whom she accuses of making too free with the bottle. Doubtless her sex gave her a closer insight into the habits of the females than I could possibly obtain; yet, had such been the custom, I think I should have observed something of it, or have heard it remarked by others, which I never did. At all events, her accusation was but an ungrateful return for the kindness which she received, and the hospitality of which she partook, and upon which, as the wife of a naval officer not possessing a fixed habitation, she must have entirely depended for society. I have frequently met Mrs. Grahame in company at Madras, and I must say that she certainly was not one whose notions of female propriety I should have depended on. That the indolent lives led by the ladies in India, are such as not to improve their domestic habits, cannot be denied; but I do believe that their character for modesty and temperance will bear comparison with that of the same classes of females in any other portion of the British dominions.

One thing disappointed me a good deal—that was, the flavour of the East India fruits; for, excepting one or two scarce kinds of the mango, procured with difficulty, hardly any of them are worth eating, having generally a rough pungent taste, without that happy mixture of sweet and sour so agreeable to the palate. I was the more surprised at this, as, from having lived in a cold climate,

where Pomona courts heat in every shape, I had always associated in my mind sun-beams and delicious fruit, considering one as the necessary consequence of the other. There is, to be sure, at a place called Sauughur, about 120 miles from Madras, close under the Ghauts, a garden belonging to the Nabob of Arcot, which produces oranges of a very superior kind; but as I have not heard of any other place in which they arrive at perfection, this agreeable fruit must be considered altogether as an exotic in Hindostan.

I had not been above three months at the Presidency, when, through the interest of Colonel Agnew, who wished to give me an opportunity of obtaining some practical knowledge in a branch of my profession, I was appointed to attend a committee proceeding on a survey of the fortified places in the Ceded Districts, so called as being the Company's share of the conquered dominions of Tippoo. Colonel Agnew was the president, and an artillery and an engineer officer the members. For the latter and myself the duty was very laborious, as we had to make minute plans of half a dozen fortified places, three or four of which were hill-forts of great extent. Of these latter, as they are peculiar to India, I shall attempt a description.

The spot fixed upon is generally a hill, or rather mountain, standing by itself in a plain, or so unconnected with its contiguous chain as to be out of the reach of annoyance from that quarter. It is also such as to be, from its declivity, or the scarped nature of its sides, particularly difficult of ascent. Where nature has provided a sufficient rampart, no addition in the shape of walls is made; but in other parts works of defence, adapted to the form of the ground, are multiplied one within another, according as the parts are more or less precipitous. Much ingenuity is often displayed in this, and every advantage is taken of projecting rocks, or other circumstances, in forming flank-defences, which generally consist of round towers as nearly at regular distances as the ground will admit of. These hill-forts, when viewed from a short distance, have generally a most formidable

appearance ; but, unless where nature has so formed the face of the rock as to render the ascent impossible, they are seldom so in reality. The works are, of necessity, so exposed, that, if you can get sufficiently near to raise a battery against them, they are easily breached, notwithstanding the elevation that you are compelled to give to the guns ; while the irregularity in the sides of the hills affords facilities for forming lodgments close up to the walls. Most of these hill-forts have a town or pettah attached to them, surrounded by a wall of no great strength. These pettahs are generally situated on the plain close under the hill ; the whole together being somewhat in the shape of a jockey-cap, of which the fort or citadel forms the crown, and the town the rim or peak. It was in contemplation to demolish the greater part of these fortifications, which, though absolutely necessary to the protection and defence of the numerous independent principalities into which the peninsula was divided for a long time previously to its coming under the subjection of the East India Company, forms no part of the system of defence of the British territories. But, as the measure required a reference to the Court of Directors, they were, in the interim, garrisoned by small bodies of sepoys, with only one or two European officers to each party. In this manner, at the time I arrived in India, a considerable part of the Company's troops were frittered away into small detachments, which, however lucrative to the officers in command of them—for at that time they were permitted to levy a duty upon certain articles of consumption within their garrisons, which amounted in some instances to a large sum—was by no means beneficial to their discipline as corps, or to their general efficiency as a body. A different system has since been pursued, as will be shown hereafter. The effects of the old system on the character of the European officers of the Company's service were of an opposite nature ; for, while it unfitted them, in some measure, for performing their parts as subordinate members of the military machine, and had, at the same time, by abstracting them in a great degree from the company of their equals, an

injurious effect on their social characters; yet, on the other hand, from being placed in situations of responsibility, and accustomed early to command, they naturally acquired a self-confidence and decision, peculiarly qualifying them for the duties of partisans, or even for the higher departments of the profession—a fact fully exemplified in the history of our wars in India; though unfortunately the age at which they attain to high rank, the deleterious effects of the climate on their constitutions, and an undue preference of the officers of his Majesty's service, have prevented them from displaying their abilities in command so often as could have been wished.

On our route to the Ceded Districts we passed near the famous pagoda of Trippety, the only one in the peninsula, excepting that of Jagurnaut, which has never been polluted by the presence of an infidel. Numbers of pilgrims resort to it, particularly at the festivals, when scenes are exhibited almost equal to those of Jagurnaut, with which, through the means of Dr. Buchanan, the public are already made acquainted; though I am inclined to think that his descriptions have rather too high a colouring. This pagoda derives a considerable revenue from its visitants; and Jack Company comes in for his share, for the collection of which a guard of sepoys is constantly stationed there. Strange! that these enthusiasts should consent to pay a tribute for the free exercise of their religion to that government, every member of which they consider as beneath the lowest of their outcasts! or that they should bow the neck in secular matters to persons whom, were they to invade their sanctuary, they could tear to pieces without hesitation! But were I to pursue this question, it would lead to a discussion of greater length than I wish to enter upon; for it is one involving the very essence of our power in India.

Having finished our survey, we returned to Madras just in time for the north-east monsoon, which sets in on the Coromandel coast about the middle of October, and continues about two months, during which no vessel

presumes to approach the coast. The rain descends during this period in absolute torrents, such as no European can form any conception of: but a tolerable notion may be had of the whole quantity which falls, when it is known that it is sufficient for all the purposes of husbandry during the remainder of the year. With this view embankments have been made in favourable situations all over the country, to retain the water till required for the purposes of irrigation. These bodies of water, which of course differ considerably in size, are called, by the English, tanks. So important is their preservation to the welfare of the country, and, indeed, to the existence of the inhabitants, that there is an engineer officer, with several assistants, whose sole business it is to superintend them. For a short time after the monsoon the country assumes the complexion of a more temperate climate, and the heat is by no means oppressive; but the sun is not long in regaining his empire over his legitimate dominions. Yielding to his potent sway, the land soon throws aside its verdant mantle, and again resumes the drab-coloured livery of the yellow-headed god.

CHAPTER V.

Symptoms of approaching hostilities.—Author joins the army near Vellore.—An Anglo-Indian Camp.—The March.—Baggage.—Beasts of burthen; mode of urging them on.—System of living in Camp.—Anecdote.—Europeans too much disposed to beat their servants.—Anecdote on that subject.—Ascent of the Ghauts, and change of climate.—Chittledroog.—Airs affected by the Staff and anecdote.—Anecdotes of Captain Grose.

Symptoms of approaching hostilities had for some time been evinced in warlike preparations at the Presidency, and no sooner did the season permit, than considerable bodies of troops began to move towards the frontier. Being appointed to accompany the force, I joined a considerable part of the army assembled near

Vellore, under General Stewart, the commander-in chief of the Madras army. This was the first time I had seen an Anglo-Indian camp on a large scale, and it certainly had a very imposing effect. The quantity of tents pitched in regular lines, covering a great extent of ground, intermixed with the gay uniforms of the soldiers, and the various flags denoting the stations of the different commanders and departments, had a most brilliant appearance. I had seen camps in England, containing considerable bodies of troops, but nothing on so grand a scale as this. Six tents, considerably larger than the bell-tents used in England, were allowed to each company of Europeans, and three to each company of sepoys. Every officer had a marquee to himself, differing in size according to the rank of the occupier; but the smallest ten feet square, with high walls and a double fly. The whole were pitched in regular order—the private tents in front, the subalterns in a line behind them, the captains next, and the field officers and regimental staff in the rear. The brigadiers and their staff occupied a situation nearly behind the centre of their brigades, and the union-jack, denoting the head-quarters, floated on a lofty pole, as near as possible in the centre of the whole line. Near the magnificent tents of the commander-in-chief and his personal staff were those of the general staff of the army, occupying two or more lines. This was called the head-quarter line, and, as the tents were generally large, it covered a considerable space of ground. On each flank of the head-quarters, at some distance, the different departments of commissary, cattle-agent, pioneers, engineers, &c. were encamped; and in the rear of the whole was the bazaar, generally extending in a line parallel to the front. When the ground permitted it, the camp was formed in one straight line, with the park of artillery in the centre, and the cavalry on one flank, the horses being picketted in straight lines or streets perpendicular to the front. The whole occupied the same space that the army would, if drawn up in order of battle of one line. Supposing, then, the force encamped to consist of 10,000 fighting men,

the front would be about two miles, and the depth about half a mile; the greater part of this parallelogram, not taken up by the regular tents of the army, being covered with the booths of the bazaar and the small tents of the camp-followers. Imagine that over this space are scattered bipeds of all shades, from the fair European down to the pariah, whose skin rivals the polish of Warren's blacking, intermingled with quadrupeds of all sizes, from the elephant down to the dog, and you will have a tolerable idea of an Anglo-Indian camp.

The breaking up of such a camp is perhaps a more curious sight than the camp itself. Soon after the general has sounded the preparation to march, the tents disappear, and, in their place, an innumerable swarm of living creatures are seen busily moving about like a disturbed ant's nest; or, to a person taking a bird's-eye view of the scene, it would seem as if an immense hatch of oviparous animals had just broken from their shells. Nor is the analogy to a colony of ants lessened, when after the beating of the assembly, the troops are seen moving off in military order, followed by endless files of baggage-animals and their numerous attendants. In marching, the baggage is supposed to move in a parallel column on the reverse flank of the army; but, in general, when not close to an enemy, or within reach of the predatory horse, the greater part follows the column of march in no very compact order: the rear-guard, which brings up the whole, has therefore, as may be expected, no very enviable duty in so hot a climate. Indeed, on a long march, it is frequently kept out till dark, in the endeavour to urge on the tardy followers, and their jaded, often half-starved, beasts. Excepting the tents of the Europeans, which were carried by elephants provided by the government, the baggage of the army, when I began my military career, was generally carried by bullocks, the commandants of native regiments having at that time the contract for supplying and conveying the camp-equipage of their corps. These latter animals are by no means hardy; and unless supplied regularly with forage of straw or grain, are soon so weak as to be unfit for labour,

besides being particularly subject to sore backs. The scenes that occur in consequence on a long march are often amusing to those whose sensibility is not very acute. The various means adopted by the drivers to excite these unfortunate animals to accelerate their pace, or to rise when they have courted the aid of the road in support of their burdens, are ingenious and diverting: sometimes they may be seen twisting the tail with their hands like a straw-rope, or squeezing it between two sticks; at others stooping down and biting it with their teeth; while a lighted wisp of straw, tantamount to the red-hot poker of the Irish carman, is reserved for the *ultima ratio*. An amateur of the picturesque would here find ample scope for the indulgence of an appetite for the ludicrous. The numbers of bullocks which die on a rapid march, from a scarcity of forage, or during a hard night's rain—for they are particularly susceptible of cold—is scarcely credible. When I last served with the army, bullocks had given place to camels, whenever they could be procured. These last are particularly adapted to the purposes of a campaign; for, not only are they more hardy and better marchers than the bullocks, but their chief provender, branches of trees, may mostly be procured when other kinds of forage cannot, perhaps, be found at all.

The quantity of baggage which accompanies an Indian army will not excite so much surprise, when it is considered that large supplies of every article of consumption must be carried with it, there being no means of renewing your stock, excepting by convoys from the rear. Notwithstanding the quantity of necessaries and luxuries with which every one, according to his means, takes care to furnish himself at starting, it frequently happens, during a campaign, that those things which are considered essential to comfort are not to be had for love or money: consequently, immense sums are realized by suttlers who have taken advantage of a convoy to bring to the camp supplies of European commodities. When I first joined the camp there were no such things as regimental messes, as it was considered impossible to

keep them up in the field, though I understand they have since become general; but a few officers usually dined day and day about with one another, each contributing his small stock of ware to contain the provision, if not to decorate the board; and, as every one sent his chair, knife and fork, and plate, there was no great trouble in laying out the table, provided the materials for consumption were procurable.

This brings to my recollection a story, which will come in very *a-propos* here.

An officer, whose stock of table-linen had been completely exhausted during the campaign—whether by wear and tear or accident I cannot say—had a few friends to dine with him. The dinner being announced to the party, seated in the *al fresco* drawing-room of a camp, the table appeared spread with eatables, but without the usual covering of a cloth. The master, who perhaps gave himself but little trouble about these matters, or who probably relied upon his servant's capacity in the art of borrowing, or, at all events, on his ingenuity in framing an excuse, inquired, with an angry voice, why there was no table-cloth? The answer was, "Master not got;" with which reply, after apologising to his guests, he was compelled, for the present to put up. The next morning he called his servant, and rated him soundly, and perhaps beat him, (for I lament to say that this was too much the practice with European masters in India,) for exposing his poverty to the company; desiring him another time, if similarly circumstanced to say that all the table-cloths were gone to the wash. Another day, although the table appeared clothed in the proper manner, the spoons, which had probably found their way to the bazaar, perhaps to provide the very articles of which the feast was composed, were absent, whether with or without leave is immaterial. "Where are all the spoons?" cried the apparently enraged master. "Gone washerman sar!" was the answer. Roars of laughter succeeded, and a teacup did duty for the soup-ladle. The probable consequence of this unlucky exposure of the domestic economy of the host, namely, a

sound drubbing to the poor maty-boy, brings to my mind an anecdote, which, being in a story-telling vein, I cannot resist the temptation of introducing. It was related to me, with great humour, by one of the principals in the transaction, whose candour exceeded his fear of shame. He had been in the habit of beating his servants, till one in particular complained that he would have him before Sir Henry Gwillam, then chief justice at Madras, who had done all in his power to suppress the disgraceful practice. Having a considerable balance to settle with his maty-boy on the score of punishment, but fearing the presence of witnesses, the master called him one day into a bungalow at the bottom of his garden, at some distance from the house. "Now," said he, as he shut the door and put the key in his pocket, "you'll complain to Sir Henry Gwillam, will you? There is nobody near to bear witness to what you may say, and, with the blessing of God, I'll give it you well." "Master sure nobody near?" asked the Indian. "Yes, yes, I've taken good care of that." "Then I give master one good beating." And forthwith the maty-boy proceeded to put his threat into execution, till the master, being the weaker of the two, was compelled to cry mercy; which being at length granted, and the door opened with at least as much alacrity as it was closed, Mactoo decamped without beat of drum, never to appear again.

But to return from this digression. It was customary for the person who found dinner one day to supply breakfast and tiffin, which on the march were thrown into one, the day after. In the composition of this meal the cold meat of the preceding dinner was of considerable use. It took place as soon as possible after the troops reached their ground; for which purpose an active servant or two were dispatched with the mess-trunks and table on the best bullock or camel of the team; and as the remainder of the baggage, among which were the tents, did not probably arrive for some time after, this meal was often spread under a tree.

In the beginning of February the army ascended the Ghauts. Here the alteration in climate was very appa-

rent. The days were by no means disagreeably hot, and the nights cold enough to require the covering of a blanket. In fact, the difference of temperature between any two spots depends more upon their height above the sea than on the degree of inclination of the sun's rays; 1000 feet of height making more difference than ten degrees of latitude. We had now reached the table-land of Mysore, the climate of which may be considered, on the whole, pleasant. It partakes of both monsoons, without the extreme severity of either; so that the high lands are capable of being cultivated without irrigation, which, however, is practised for rice, wherever the ground will admit of it. For this purpose, tanks are formed at intervals in the different valleys, by running dams across from one height to another.

About the middle of February we reached Bangalore, a place well known in the wars of Lord Cornwallis, and since become an extensive cantonment for troops. Here was a large botanical garden supported by government. The plants, fruits, and vegetables, of most climates grow here, and many of them in perfection. Potatoes and cabbage, which, when I first arrived in India, were considered rare articles (the former being procured from Bengal, and no larger than a walnut) had, after the establishment of the cantonment, been produced in great abundance, and of excellent quality; and before I quitted the country, the potato of Mysore had become an article of trade to most parts of India.

The army halted a few days at Chittledroog, a hill-fort, also well known in the wars with Tippoo, then garrisoned by our troops. It had a formidable appearance, and covered a great extent of ground, but was by no means so strong as many other hill-forts I had seen. As yet I had experienced nothing but the sweets of a camp life. The weather was pleasant, our supplies were abundant, and the duty to me was light; for as we had not yet entered a hostile territory, there was little for an engineer to do. One thing, however, struck me as disagreeable, that was the parade and nonsense kept up in the army, and which, without adding to discipline, only served to create disgust

to the service. However hot the weather might be, an officer could scarcely stir out of his tent without being buckled up in sword and sash, for fear of meeting some jack-in-office of a staff-officer, who, if he found him straying out of his lines not altogether *en militaire*, would send him back to his tent with a flee in his ear. In truth, the airs which these favourites of fortune gave themselves, towards those who continued to trudge on in the beaten path of their profession, were insufferable. I recollect about this time a brother officer of mine asking one of these upstarts, with whom he had formerly been on most intimate terms, whether we should halt the next day? "I really do not know the intentions of the general," was the reply. Returning to his tent somewhat disgusted with the airs of his former companion, and soliloquizing on the nature of man, and the fantastic tricks which he plays, when "dressed in a little brief authority," he was met by his maty-boy with the information that the army was to halt the next day. "Where did you learn that?" said my friend. "Major M——'s washerman tell." So Major M—— could tell his washerman, that he might take advantage of the halt to blanch his linen, but he could not communicate it to an old friend; although, from the situation of the army, it mattered not, in a military point of view, if the fact were known from one end of India to the other. This circumstance reminds me also of a story which was told me of Captain Grose of the Madras army, who was killed at the siege of Seringapatam. He was son of Grose, the antiquary, whose talents he inherited. He was remarkable for his wit and humour, and his memory is still cherished by all the lovers of fun who knew him. Having had occasion to make some communication to head-quarters, he was received much in the usual manner by one of the understrappers, who told him that no verbal communications could be received, but that what he had to say must be sent through the medium of an official letter. He happened, some days afterwards, to have a party dining with him, and among others were a few members of the staff. In the midst of dinner a jack-ass came

running among the tent-ropes, exerting his vocal organs in a manner by no means pleasing to the company. Grose immediately rose, and thus addressed the intruder:

"I presume, sir, you come from head-quarters. I receive no verbal communications whatever, sir. If you have any thing to say to me, sir, I beg you will commit it to paper." The will which Captain Grose made the night before the storming of Seringapatam, under a presentiment of his fate was quite in character. It began with the apostrophe of "O my nose!" and among other bequests contained the present of a wooden sword to an officer of rank to whom he bore no good will, and who was supposed not to be endowed with any superfluous quantity of personal valour.

CHAPTER VI.

Arrival of the army at Hurryhur.—Joined by the Mysore detachment under General Wellesley.—Opinion then entertained of that Officer.—Anecdote respecting General Wellesley at the siege of Seringapatam.—Force detached under his command.—Commence the march for Poonah.—Cross the Toombudra.—Deserted state of the country.—Looties.—Hung when caught.—Bheels.—Officers' tents robbed.—Dexterity of these Thieves.—Cross the Kistnah.—Fort of Darwar.—Feudal Chiefs.—Their visits.—Their retinues and cavalcades.—Description and appearance of the Mahratta villages.—Devastated state of the country. Scarcity of forage and mortality among the cattle in consequence. A turban-eating bullock.—Mode of supplying horses with grass. Pioneers, their activity and skill.—Artillery.—Elephants.—Anecdotes of their sagacity.

The army kept increasing in force as we advanced to the frontier; but nothing particular occurred till we reached Hurryhur, the termination of the dominions of the Rajah of Mysore on the north. Here we were joined by the division of the army from Seringapatam under General Wellesley. The force then assembled amounted to about 20,000 fighting men. A detachment was immediately formed, and placed under the command of

Major-General Wellesley, and another engineer officer and myself were directed to join it. This was the first time I had seen that extraordinary man, who has since proved himself the greatest commander of the age, and justly earned the title of the Invincible Wellington. He had only just attained the rank of Major-General; but he had already, by his successful campaign against Doondiah, one of Tippoo's adherents, who had raised the standard of the Tiger after the fall of his master, acquired considerable reputation; although but a short time before, at the siege of Seringapatam, an untoward circumstance had nearly been the means of crushing in the bud that genius which has since so proudly blossomed forth to the glory of England, and the fruit of which has been the liberation of Europe. As I have been often asked for an account of this affair, which has made some noise in the world to the disadvantage of his Grace, I shall lay before my reader the particulars, as communicated to me by the only person who could possibly give a fair account of the business, that is, the late Lieutenant-Colonel M'Kenzie, of the Madras Engineers, who was then attached to Colonel Wellesley's division, and who accompanied him during the whole of the affair in question.

Shortly after the investment of Seringapatam, Colonel Wellesley, who commanded what was called the Nizam's detachment, was ordered to dislodge the enemy from the ground intended as the scene of our operations during the seige. The night appointed for this duty was particularly dark. Pushing on rather too eagerly with the light company of the 33d regiment, which had, by those means, got separated from the main body, he came suddenly on a work of the enemy's, who opened a heavy fire. The light company finding themselves unsupported, retreated rather precipitately, leaving Colonel Wellesley and Captain M'Kenzie by themselves. In this predicament they endeavored to regain their division; but in the attempt, owing to the darkness of the night, they quite lost their way, and it was not till after groping about for some hours that they succeeded in regain-

ing the British camp, but without their division. Having proceeded to head-quarters, to report the state of affairs, Colonel Wellesley, hearing that General Harris was asleep, threw himself on the table of the dining tent, and, being much fatigued with the night's labour, fell fast asleep. The next in command had, in the interim, after the repulse of the head of the column, and the loss of the commander, thought it prudent to proceed no further, and made the best of his way back to the camp with the division. Arriving at the tent of the commander-in-chief to make his report, he was surprised to find his missing superior, fast locked in the arms of Morpheus, in the situation above described. This affair, of course, made considerable noise, and things were whispered about not at all to the advantage of Colonel Wellesley; and it is to be supposed that the commander-in-chief must have partaken of this feeling towards the Colonel; otherwise he would not have ordered General Baird to undertake the attack which had failed the preceding night. General Baird most handsomely requested that Colonel Wellesley might again be appointed to the duty, as he was convinced that the circumstances which had caused his failure were purely accidental. Colonel Wellesley was accordingly directed to make another attempt the night following, and succeeded: yet, so poisonous is the breath of slander, and so rapidly is it wafted, if not by the loud trumpet of fame, at least by the low but quick vibrations of malice, that it required years of victory entirely to wipe away the impressions then received from the minds of those who are more ready to listen to evil than to good report. For my part, even before I heard Colonel M'Kenzie's version of the affair, I was of opinion that the fact of Colonel Wellesley's having fallen asleep on General Harris' table in the way he did, was a sufficient proof that he had not acted disgracefully; for who, under that conviction, could have had his mind sufficiently at ease to yield himself up to sleep, if ever so overcome with fatigue? Besides, any imputation of deficiency of courage must equally have applied to Colonel M'Kenzie, whose bra-

very and *sang-froid* in action were proverbial. This circumstance is a proof how much easier it is to make a breach in a soldier's reputation than to repair it; for it is more than probable that, had not Colonel Wellesley been so nearly allied to the Governor-General, he never would have had a chance of getting over this affair.

The appearance and demeanour of General Wellesley were such as at first sight to inspire confidence, which feeling was not diminished on a closer acquaintance. All those who served under him looked up to him with that degree of respect, I might almost say of awe, which, by combining an implicit obedience to his commands with an unbounded confidence in the wisdom of his measures, was calculated to draw forth all the energies of man in the execution of his orders.

The force detached under General Wellesley consisted of his Majesty's 19th dragoons and three regiments of native cavalry, the 74th and Scotch brigade, King's regiments, and six battalions of native infantry, with a proportion of artillery, and a battalion of pioneers. One brigade, composed of the 74th and three battalions of sepoys, was commanded by Colonel Wallace; the other, consisting of the Scotch brigade and three battalions of sepoys, by Colonel Harness. The cavalry was commanded by Colonel Dallas, and the artillery by Captain Beauman. To this force was attached a body of about 2,500 horse, belonging to the Rajah of Mysore, under the command of an old officer of experience, and much attached to the British. These were called Silladar horse, and were of a much superior order to the Indian cavalry in general.

On the 3d March we commenced our march for Poonah, and on the 12th crossed the Toombudra river, which bounds the territories subordinate to the Paishwah. After this we found the country in a great measure deserted, having been lately overrun by some of Holkar's adherents, one of whom, Amrut Row, a noted chief, continued to precede our force to finish the work of devastation. Forage, of course, became extremely scarce. We, however, received no other interruption than hav-

ing a few of our straggling foraging parties cut off by the Looty horse, who are a kind of semi-thieves and semi-soldiers, ever ready to assume either character as suits their purposes. Whenever such were caught in the act of plundering, the general, without hesitation, ordered them to be hung up to the first tree; which summary way of proceeding at the outset, I have no doubt, much contributed to preserve our camp from depredations during the subsequent campaign. Of course it could not be expected that we should escape occasional visits from the Bheels, or professed robbers, who abound in this part of India, where the want of a regular government enables them to practise their craft almost with impunity. These fellows are notoriously expert in the art of thieving. Indeed, it is not surprising that they should be so; for they are brought up to the trade from their infancy. Several of the officers had their tents entered by a slit cut in the walls, and some articles of value carried off. They managed the business so well, that they were seldom caught in the fact, and even if you did chance to lay hold of them, they would slip through your hands like eels, being stripped quite naked, and oiled all over for that purpose. A remarkable instance of their ingenuity and dexterity in their art was related to me by an officer who witnessed the circumstance. A bet was laid by a gentleman that he would procure a Bheel who should steal the sheet from under a person without waking him. The thing was effected in the following manner: the Bheel approaching the person, who lay on his side, from behind, carefully folded up the sheet in small compact plaits till it reached his back; then, taking a feather, he tickled the nose of the sleeper, who immediately scratched his face and rolled over on the other side, when with a slight effort he completely released the sheet, and bore it off in triumph.

As far as Darwar, the country we had passed through, after quitting the Toombudra, had been the scene of General Wellesley's operations against Doondiah in the campaign of 1801. We crossed the rivers Gulpurba and Mulpurba, both fordable at this season of the year;

and about the end of March reached the banks of the Kistnah, where the General caused a redoubt to be thrown up, and garrisoned by a few companies of sepoys, as a post of communication with the Company's territories. The bed of the Kistnah was about 800 yards wide at this spot, and fordable at all points for some distance below the place where we crossed it. Between this river and the Toombudra we passed no towns of any consequence, except Bejâpoor and Darwar, the former nothing but the ruins of a once famed city, which had been the capital of the kingdom of Bejapoor. The latter was a fortress of some strength, maintained by an independent chief, who appeared very jealous of our approach. It had formerly sustained the attack of a small detachment of the Bombay army under Major Little, then acting as an auxiliary with the Paishwah's troops. After making a short halt on the banks of the Kistnah, the army continued its march for Poonah. The tract of country between the Toombudra and Poonah has long been under the dominion of the Mahrattas, although divided among a number of chiefs, each assuming supremacy in his own petty dominions; in fact, exhibiting a kind of feudal system. Some of these viewed us with a degree of suspicion, keeping aloof, and shutting the gates of their fortresses against us; but the majority, who were attached to the Paishwah, manifested a friendly disposition, and exchanged civilities with the General. These consisted chiefly in ceremonial visits, on which occasions the native chieftains were accompanied by their principal officers and a considerable train of followers. The various military costumes exhibited on these occasions might have supplied abundant subjects for the pencil; but as mine had other employment in the duties of my profession, I have no record of them left except in my memory, which will not supply me with the means even of describing them accurately. Suffice it to say then, that, from the intermixture of howdaed elephants, led horses in gay trappings, Hircarrah camels, ornamental kettle-drums, &c. these cavalcades, or *souwarrees*, had a most picturesque

appearance; while the sound of instruments, more martial than musical, joined to the stentorian voice of the person who runs before proclaiming the title of the chief, afforded the ear its full share in the amusement.

On our part, these chiefs were received with military honours, having a salute of artillery fired for them, according to their rank. During the conference, the usual ceremonies of handing betel-leaf, sprinkling rose-water, &c. were gone through; and presents, generally consisting of an elephant, and some ornament of jewelry for the turban of the chief, with shawls and *kinkaubs* to some of the principal officers, were distributed. On the occasion of the visit being returned by our commander, a squadron of cavalry generally formed his escort, and he was accompanied by the staff, brigadiers, and heads of departments, who received presents nearly corresponding with those presented by our chief. On one of these occasions I was not a little astonished to hear a fat fellow of a chieftain give vent to a savoury, sonorous eructation, right in our General's face, and was equally surprised to witness the apparent composure with which it was taken; till a brother officer, more conversant with Indian customs, explained to me that it was the greatest compliment which could be paid by a native. Manners differ, and so do tastes, thought I; for it is a strange kind of favour to confer upon a man, to puff into his face the nauseous effluvia of a half-digested meal. In other respects their manners were dignified and polite. One of these chieftains, of the name of Goclah, who acted as the Paishwah's general in those parts, joined us with a body of 2000 horse, and continued to serve with us till the conclusion of the campaign. This is the same person who was killed in action against us, when commanding the Paishwah's forces in the engagement with General Smith in 1816.

The country bordering our line of march, besides its recent devastation, had all the appearance of having been long exposed to hostile inroads; for the villages, as well as the towns, were fortified in such a manner as to resist any force not accompanied by artillery. The

walls were flanked by towers, and, though composed of mud, were made, from the tenacity of the materials, sufficiently scarped and high to render them safe against a *coup de main*. They were capable of containing all the valuables, and live and dead stock, of the cultivators of the surrounding country; so that nothing was to be seen without the barriers but the degraded outcast, who, his very touch being pollution, is compelled to seek protection for his wretched hut under cover of the walls, where he performs the lowest offices of the community, among which, that of shoemaker, or worker in leather, is deemed the most degrading. Within the walls, or close under them, are large subterranean excavations for containing the grain, the mouths of which are so carefully concealed, that, to every force, which is to depend on the country through which it marches for subsistence, it is necessary to attach a set of persons who make it their profession to discover these hidden granaries. These people carry with them a long iron rod, which they use in probing the ground, and display considerable ingenuity and dexterity in accomplishing their object. Each village has its municipality and police, for an account of which, as well as all subjects connected with the constitution and history of the Mahratta Empire, I beg leave to refer the reader to Sir John Malcolm's work on Central India, a book which cannot be too often read by those who wish to obtain an acquaintance with India, or too much admired for the accuracy of its statements, and the enlightened principles which it inculcates.

Although it was during the months of March and April that we passed through this country, little or no seed had been sown, owing to the disturbed state in which it had been for a considerable time. The inhabitants had either emigrated or shut themselves up in gloomy despondency, and every thing denoted an approaching famine. From the excellent dispositions of General Wellesley, the army was supplied with every thing requisite for the subsistence of the troops; but from the exhausted state of the country, we experienced

considerable difficulty in obtaining forage for our baggage-animals. In many cases, indeed, it was found necessary to take the thatch of deserted houses for this purpose. There was, therefore, as may naturally be supposed, considerable mortality among the bullocks, who appeared as usual, the greatest sufferers on this occasion. Here I cannot omit mentioning a curious circumstance which I witnessed about this time, a consequence of the privation undergone by these unfortunate beasts. Lolling one day in my tent, ruminating on the hardships of a soldier's life, and on the shifts to which he is often reduced, my eyes and my thoughts were naturally attracted to my poor cattle, who stood picketed at a short distance with nothing to chew but the cud of disappointment, having waited since morning in eager expectation of the return of a foraging party. I observed one of these, whose well defined ribs bore testimony to the scanti ess of his fare, gradually stretching out his head to a turban, belonging to one of my servants, which happened to lie within the length of his tether. After giving it a turn or two with his nose, I suppose to ascertain the possibility of its being masticated, he seized the loose end in his mouth, and actually began to swallow it. He swallowed, and swallowed; and as the voluminous folds of the turban unrolled, so fast did they disappear down the throat of the bullock, until, of at least ten yards of stuff, there remained only a small bit pendant from his jaws. I was so amused with the whole process, that I could not find it in my heart to stop him; but lay on my couch observing his operations for at least an hour. Another minute, and the turban, which had nearly reached its latter end, would have been safely deposited in the stomach of the bullock to be brought up for rumination at a favourable opportunity. Just at this critical moment the owner returned, when, looking about for his turban, he beheld the end dangling from the mouth of the animal. With an oath he flew at the bullock, and seizing the only visible portion of his garment, pulled and pulled, hand over hand, and oath upon oath, while the tattered, but still connected, cloth

came forth, like a measuring tape out of its case. The man's rage and gestures at the destruction of his turban, the beast's astonishment at the novel kind of emetic he was undergoing, and the attitudes of both, formed a scene absolutely irresistible.

Notwithstanding the hardships undergone by the baggage-cattle of the army, every care was taken to supply those attached to the guns, a very superior breed, for which we were indebted to a stud of bullocks established by Tippoo, and since kept up, in the best order, by General Wellesley, who had the command of Seringapatam after its fall. In our former wars in India, great complaints had always been made of the inefficiency of the draught bullocks, by which the march of the troops was generally much delayed and obstructed; but in this campaign, no interruption was ever caused by the guns, which could at any time outmarch the infantry. It might also be supposed by those accustomed only to European warfare, that the cavalry of the force must have suffered much from the scarcity of forage; but this was not the case, for to every horse is attached a person for the purpose of cutting grass, which is found in sufficient quantity on the banks of rivers and tanks, even in the driest season; and although the herbage may appear to be completely burnt up, still the roots, when dug up and washed, afford a nourishing food, which, with a daily allowance of about ten pounds of *gram* (a grain grown on purpose for cattle,) is sufficient to keep a horse in excellent condition. Of this latter article, however, it becomes very difficult to provide a sufficient quantity for an army, for it is impossible to reckon upon the supplies to be procured in a hostile country, generally laid waste by friend as well as foe. The officers, therefore, who have to depend on the bazaar are frequently put to great expence in feeding their cattle. At one time during this campaign it cost me nearly half my pay to keep my horse in grain alone.

The weather being favourable, that is, inasmuch as there was no rain to impede our march, though the thermometer in the day-time was extremely high, being

often up to 120° in an officer's tent, and considerably higher in that of a private, we continued to advance as rapidly as we could without too much fatiguing the troops. The force was well supplied with pioneers, a body of which always preceded the column to remove all obstacles to its progress. The activity and address of this corps was the admiration of the army. The country, however, presents but few impediments to military movements, excepting during the rainy season; and little art or labour is required to make a road, even where none before existed. This may be said of the whole of the peninsula of India above the Ghauts. At this period there was no regular corps of horse artillery belonging to the East India Company, but each corps of cavalry was provided with two guns, called gallopers. The rest of the guns were drawn by bullocks.

To the battering train were attached a few elephants, to assist the guns over any obstacles which could not be surmounted by the ordinary means. These sagacious animals always apply their strength in the most efficacious manner, either in pushing forward the guns with their foreheads, or lifting them up with their trunks, when the wheels have sunk into a deep rut or slough. They seem to possess an instinctive knowledge of the power of the lever, which they apply in pulling down trees that have been partly felled, in breaking branches for their food, &c. This latter process they effect, by taking one end of the branch in their trunk, laying the other end on the ground, and applying their foot to the intermediate part. Many instances of the manner in which they express the passions of hatred and love, of revenge and gratitude, are recorded. In fact, they have been well styled "the half-reasoning elephant." One example of their sagacity was related to me by an officer of artillery who witnessed the transaction. The battering-train going to the siege of Seringapatam had to cross the sandy bed of a river, that resembled other rivers of the Peninsula, which have during the dry season but a small stream of water running through them, though their beds are mostly of considerable breadth,

very heavy for draught, and abounding in quicksands. It happened that an artillery-man who was seated on the limber of one of the guns, by some accident fell off, in such a situation that, in a second or two, the hind wheels must have gone over him. The elephant which was stationed behind the gun, perceiving the predicament in which the man was, instantly, without any warning from its keeper, lifted up the wheel with its trunk, and kept it suspended till the carriage had passed clear of him. The attachment or dislike of elephants to their keepers, according to the treatment they receive, is too well known to need illustration. I have myself seen the wife of a mohaut (for the followers often take their families with them to camp) give a baby in charge to the elephant, while she went on some business, and have been highly amused in observing the sagacity and care of the unwieldly nurse. The child, which like most children did not like to lie still in one position, would, as soon as left to itself, begin crawling about; in which exercise it would probably get among the legs of the animal, or entangled in the branches of the trees on which he was feeding, when the elephant would, in the most tender manner, disengage his charge, either by lifting it out of the way with his trunk, or by removing the impediments to its free progress. If the child had crawled to such a distance as to verge upon the limits of its range (for the animal was chained by the leg to a peg driven into the ground,) he would stretch out his trunk, and lift it back as gently as possible to the spot whence it had started; and this without causing any alarm to the child, which appeared accustomed to the society and treatment of its Brogdignagian guardian.

CHAPTER VII.

Wild Beasts.—Jackals, Antelopes.—Coursing Foxes.—Duty on march.—Difficulty of obtaining information of the Roads.—System of Espionage.—Hircarrahs.—Approach the Nizam's subsidiary force.—Colonel Stevenson.—Hill-Fort of Sattarrah.—Descendants of Sevagee.—Forced march of the Cavalry to Poonah.—A Field of Battle.—Remarks on viewing the skeletons.—Arrival at Poonah.—Receive the Paishwah on his return.—The General pays him a formal visit.—Ceremony on that occasion.—The Paishwah and his Court.—Colonel Barry Close.—South-west Monsoon sets in.—The Army moves in the direction of Bombay. Hardships endured by it.—State of the Camp during a heavy rain.—Mode of securing the Tents.—Cotton-ground.—Mortality among the Cattle.—A march during heavy rain.—Encampment in hot weather.—Whirlwinds.—Artificial mode of cooling Tents and also liquids.—Camp, pleasant in fine weather.—Joined by troops from Bombay.—Major Malcolm.—Army moves in the direction of Ahmednaghur.—Stopped by a sudden fall of rain.—Its consequences.—A river comes down suddenly in the night, and carries away the washermen and their families.—The Author's brother engineer dies of a dysentery.—His character.—A military Funeral, and remarks on it.

The country bordering our line of march was not absolutely flat, but what might be called undulating. Except in the vicinity of towns or villages, there was very little timber, and even there it was scanty. It abounded in jackals, antelopes, and foxes; but afforded little cover for any other species of wild beasts or game. The jackals are seldom seen in the day time; but at night they prowl among the tents in large troops, howling and crying with a noise something between that of a child and a dog. I never heard, however, of their doing any serious mischief. They will feed upon the bodies of dead and dying cattle, and will tear open new-made graves, to satisfy their hunger; but they are not regarded as objects of terror.

The antelopes are possessed of such speed, that it is ridiculous to attempt to chase them with dogs, unless you should be able to single out a young one from the herd;

and when taken they are good for nothing as an eatable, which, indeed, may be said of almost all the game in India, excepting the wild hog, and the duck tribe. It is quite beautiful to see these animals come bounding in whole troops across the head, or through the intervals of the column, taking such springs that any one of them would clear a dense column of soldiers with fixed bayonets.

The foxes, however, afford excellent sport in coursing. An English fox-hunter will stare at this, and doubtless exclaim, "Course a fox!" while his whip rises mechanically over his head, as if it would, of itself, chastise on the spot such unsportsman-like conduct. But let me expostulate a little. We would not course them if we could hunt them by any other means; but in such a hot climate that is out of the question. Not only does the fox-hound fall off altogether, after the first year from his arrival from England, but, even with the assistance of aniseed on a bagman, it has been found impossible to continue the chase for more than half an hour after sunrise; for as soon as Aurora has shaken the dew off her locks no scent will lie. Many greyhounds are kept by the officers for the purpose of coursing foxes. These afford much better sport than the hares; though swifter for a short distance, the latter have not the bottom of the fox, which is of a smaller breed, and much fleeter than the English fox. The dogs in use are a cross between the English greyhound and the Polygar dog, which is of the same species, but much stronger, and more ferocious, though not so swift. Without this cross, the English dog would degenerate in the climate; and besides, he is not always possessed of sufficient courage to seize a fox. As the chaser and chasee are thus better matched than the greyhound and hare in England, and as there are no hedges to intercept the view, the sport is much superior in every respect. Often, indeed, the courses are so long that the dogs, being blown, require the assistance of the horsemen, who then push forward and endeavour to head the fox. In this manner, without any dog, but with the assistance of another horseman, I have often run down a

fox, by alternately turning him from one to the other; and once I effected this by myself, not by heading the fox, for by that he would have gained upon me, but by pursuing him at such a distance that he could not double without giving me an advantage over him; till at last I completely tired him out.

The horses generally used in the chase are of the Arab breed, well known for their speed and bottom. the only impediments you meet with in riding are from ravines, or channels, caused by the rushing of the waters from the higher grounds during the rains. These obstacles sometimes come upon you so suddenly as to require considerable activity in the horse, and dexterity in the rider, to clear or to avoid them. But there can be no sport without some degree of danger, which is, in fact, the spice of pleasure. In this manner many of the officers would amuse themselves, even on the line of march, as the duty was not carried on so strictly but that a few at a time were allowed to fall out for that purpose. In the course of the chase the fox would sometimes approach so near the column as to afford sport even to those whose duty retained them in the ranks. On this occasion, if the fox was nearly spent, there would be a general rush for the brush, in the contest for which not a little mirth was excited. The General himself often partook of the sport, which he appeared to enjoy much. The foxes are generally found in the open country, lurking about the broken ground and ravines.

Passing near the Fort of Darwar, we were joined by Captain Johnston of the Bombay engineers, who took command of this department. Of this officer I shall have to speak hereafter. Previously to his arrival, the duty had been very severe upon the engineers. Besides the regular duties of our profession, almost all the business usually conducted by the Quarter-master-general's department of an European army, except that of marking out the camp, devolved upon us; and that, in a country which had scarcely ever been crossed by an European force, was a business of no trifling difficulty. Our way was to be felt by information obtained on the

spot; every inch of the ground passed over was to be accurately surveyed, and plans were to be made of every encampment. The difficulty of obtaining correct information in a strange part of India can be estimated by those only who are well acquainted with the character of the natives. It is their policy to withhold every fact they possess, even though it cost them nothing to give it; and to deceive you by every means in their power, even when they can themselves derive no apparent benefit from so doing. This observation applies particularly to the Mahrattas. It is only by working on their fears, and by cross-questioning them separately, that you can come at the truth. Captain Johnston used to display an ability in this way, the results of which were surprising, and which rendered his services in the war particularly valuable. The intelligence department the General kept to himself, but in that no great art is required. Plenty of gold is all that is necessary there, and all the world over. In no country is the system of espionage so well understood as in India. In fact, information is there a regular marketable commodity; and there are professed dealers in it, just as in any other article. The same person, indeed, will often supply different parties with information of each other's movements. This is all fair, and no good general can complain of it. While his plans are in his own head, he need not fear his movements being known, provided he can obtain correct information of those of his enemy. The persons employed in carrying dispatches in India are called hircarrahs, and are generally mounted on fleet camels, which will travel a great distance at the rate of fifteen miles an hour. But where great secrecy is required, footmen are generally employed; they go disguised as peasants, and have the most ingenious modes of concealing the papers with which they are intrusted.

When we arrived at the Beemah river, a branch of the Kistnah, we found ourselves within a few marches of the Nizam's subsidiary force, under Colonel Stevenson; and the Scotch brigade was sent to join it. On our march we passed within sight of the hill-fort of Sat-

tarrah, where the nominal head of the Mahratta empire, and descendant of Sevagee, was confined, the Paishwah pretending to govern only in his name.

When we had arrived within about sixty miles of Poonah, the general, hearing that Amrut Row, a chief of Holkar's, who was in possession of the capital, had resolved, on the approach of the British troops, to sack and burn it, determined to make an effort for its relief. Leaving the infantry to proceed leisurely, he made a forced march on the night of the 19th of April with the cavalry, and arrived on the following day, just in time to save the city from threatened destruction; though without encountering the enemy, who retreated precipitately on receiving intelligence of our approaching force. Continuing their march, the remainder of the army descended the Bhoor Ghaut, one of the passes in a range of hills which run parallel to the Moota-moola river, and reached Poonah on the 23d of April.

Within a few miles of this capital we passed over the ground where a battle had been fought in the preceding year by a part of the army of Scindia, joined to that of the Paishwah, against Holkar, which ended in the defeat of the former. Considerable steadiness and discipline are said to have been displayed on this occasion by a brigade of infantry belonging to Scindia, drilled and officered by Europeans, which effected its retreat in good order. It was reported that Holkar displayed some generalship in this action, although, if we might judge from the specimen we had of the Paishwah's troops, he could not have experienced any great resistance from them.

The scene of action was strewed with the bones of men and horses; for the natives are not very nice in burying their dead after an action. This was the first field of battle I had ever seen, and I confess that I contemplated the monuments of human ambition and folly there displayed with some degree of awe. The most philosophic remark which I made, nevertheless, was, that all the men to whom these skeletons belonged, seemed to have been killed by a blow on the head, to

which sage conclusion I had come from observing that all the skulls had cracks running across them, which I afterwards learnt were nothing more than the natural sutures of the human head. It is not always that conclusions are formed upon more solid premises.

After the above-mentioned battle the Paishwah was compelled to abandon his capital to the victors, and sought the protection of the British Government, by which he was hospitably received, and had the fortress of Severndroog given up to him for his residence. Here he remained till Poonah was recovered by the force under General Wellesley; shortly after which event he commenced his march towards his capital, escorted by a considerable force of British, and accompanied by Colonel Close, the resident at his Court. On the road he passed our force, which was drawn out to receive him with every mark of respect; and, on the 13th of May, he resumed his seat on the musnud.

Shortly afterwards our General paid a formal visit to his Highness, on which occasion he was attended by the principal officers of the army. Though I could not pretend to rank myself among the big wigs, (for I was perhaps the youngest officer in the army,) the General desired me, as well as the other engineer officers, always to accompany him on these occasions. The palace of the Paishwah was but a mean edifice according to our notions of architecture, and not very grand according to any other. On approaching his Highness we were ordered to take off our boots, a ceremony since dispensed with, as the uncovering the head of the European is now properly considered equivalent to the taking off the slippers of the native. Having come unprepared for this part of the ceremony, the uncasing of my feet exposed the tattered state of my wardrobe in such a manner as to excite the risibility of the bystanders, from which disgrace I sought concealment in the crowd. The Paishwah was then about thirty years of age, and a man of mean appearance. He had no very splendid court about him. The city of Poonah was the largest and best built I had yet seen in India; but still

a poor place when compared with an European town. It is situated on the banks of the Moota-moola, and, being backed by the hills we had just descended, its appearance was picturesque. The Moota-moola derives its name from the junction of two rivers of the names of which it is compounded. At their conflux, about a mile above the town, are beautifully situated the house and gardens of the Resident. Here I experienced the hospitality of Colonel Barry Close, to whom I had letters of introduction. He was a man much looked up to, both in his civil and military capacity; and deservedly so. He had been adjutant-general of the army at the siege of Seringapatam, to the fall of which he had mainly contributed. Of late he had had a most difficult card to play during the contentions among the Mahratta powers, and had acquitted himself in a manner highly satisfactory to the Governor-General. I doubt not he would have proved a great general, as well as a consummate statesman, had fortune given him the opportunity to display his talents.

We had scarcely reached Poonah before the south-west monsoon began to set in; and, as no military operations could then be carried on, the force made a march or two in the direction of Bombay, in order to be nearer to supplies from that Presidency, as well as for the advantage of forage, the country in that direction being less exhausted than the vicinity of Poonah. Here we continued till the beginning of July, occasionally changing our camp for the sake of the health of the troops, as the filth collected by a long stay in any spot would be apt to engender disease in an army where the followers are so numerous. Having no other covering than tents, we, of course, suffered not a little from the rain, against which even the best canvass was not proof. But when the rain was accompanied by high wind, the combination of the elements was irresistible. Many a time have our poor fellows had their tents lifted from over their heads, and been left exposed to the pelting of the pitiless storm. I have myself been obliged, on more than one occasion, to summon my servants in

the middle of the night to assist in supporting the tottering tent-pole, till, all the pegs having given way from the moisture of the ground, I have been compelled to abandon the dripping pile of tent, baggage, and servants, and make my escape, drenched from head to foot, to seek the shelter of some neighbouring tent, which, from having been better secured than my own, was enabled to ride out the storm. This, when the thermometer is so low as it is during the monsoon, is no trifling hardship. The mode of securing tents, when there is a probability of rain, is ingenious, and, except in extreme cases, generally effectual. Opposite to each corner of the tent, outside the pegs, a longitudinal hole is dug, and in it is buried a branch of a tree or a bush, to which are attached the corner tent-ropes after they have been passed round the pegs. These branches, of course, cannot be pulled out of the ground without considerable force, while their resistance is increased by rain, which renders the earth that covers them more ponderous. If, besides this, four strong ropes are carried from the top of the tent-pole to a considerable distance in the direction of each corner, and fastened in the manner abovementioned, a tent may be considered as secure. But there are few who have it in their power to take all these precautions; and even then they are very much at the mercy of their servants, who will always do as little as they can help. Lest the rain should flow over the floor of the tent a small trench is dug close round the walls, against which the earth is laid; and this also prevents the wind or rain from beating under.

If heavy rain should come on, when the camp is pitched in what is called cotton-ground, (by the wags denominated Holy Land,) a jet black soil, which, in dry weather, is full of large fissures, dangerous to ride over, but in rain a deep, almost bottomless puddle, then, indeed, a scene is exhibited such as it is impossible adequately to describe. The plain is covered with prostrate tents, (for the greatest precaution can hardly keep them standing on such a soil,) with dead and dying cattle half buried in mud, and with dripping, shivering

wretches, vainly crowding together for warmth; for the torrents of rain prevents fires from being kept up as in a European bivouac. In short, all nature for the time wears the garb of desolation. The flood-gates of the heavens are opened; and man and beast, unprepared, both in constitution and habits, for bearing up against the combination of cold and moisture, sink at once into the extreme of wretchedness. Not only is there then great mortality among the cattle, but the dysentery which follows such exposure sweeps off numbers of both troops and followers, European as well as native. Two or three times we found ourselves in the situation above described. This was a lesson to us never, if it could be avoided, to pitch our tents but on hard gravelly ground, which, however, we had, in many instances, great difficulty in finding. If, as it sometimes happened, we were overtaken by rain on the march over a tract of this cotton-land, then a scene, more distressing, if possible, than the former took place. Such floundering and kicking, such swearing and beating, such biting of tails, and such biting the mud! (for dust there was none)—in short, Bunyan's "Slough of Despond" was a joke to it.

Nor is the camp in the hot season a much more enviable situation. While the excessive heat—for the thermometer is sometimes as high as 120° in the coolest tent—leaves you in a state of languor and exhaustion, the clouds of hot dust, gathered from the parched soil and borne along by the wind, and which no canvass can entirely exclude, are absolutely suffocating. Occasional whirlwinds, called by the natives Devils, come sweeping along the plain, involving in their vortex tents, clothes, papers, and every article not possessing sufficient gravity to withstand them. The scenes occasioned by these pests are often ludicrous and diverting to those who happen not to be the sufferers; particularly if one takes its course through the bazaar, or the small tents of the followers. These, being but slightly fastened, become an easy prey; when the tents or booths, and their volatile contents, may be seen ascending in spiral whirls

towards the heavens, followed by the exclamations of the owners, who are running to and fro in all directions in search of their scattered goods. If to the above annoyances are added the fatigue and exhaustion undergone in a march on a hot land-wind day, I will venture to assert, that no hardships experienced in European warfare, except indeed during a severe winter's campaign, which does not often occur, can be compared with those endured by an Indian army in the field. People may talk of the luxuries of the East; but, after all, what are they, but artificial means of obviating the effects of heat?—such as a cool glass of water on a hot day. They are, in fact, almost all of a negative quality. "Sweet is pleasure after pain," says Dryden; and in this sentence is comprehended the summit of an European's enjoyment in the East, at least in the military branch of the service. Those officers who can afford it, endeavour so to construct their tents as to render them impervious to the sun and dust: and this may in a great measure be effected by giving them double walls, as well as a fly. If, in addition to this, a mat, or *tatty*, made of grass (sometimes of an aromatic herb called *kuss-kuss*,) be suspended during the hot winds at the door, in the direction of the wind, and kept constantly wet, so that the air may become cooled in its passage through it, while every other orifice is carefully closed, the atmosphere of the tent may be rendered tolerable. But there are not many who can enjoy this luxury in perfection; for it requires a man constantly at work to keep the tatty wet. All, however, have it in their power to take advantage of the dry wind in cooling water or wine (if they have it,) which is done effectually by suspending to the tent-ropes, bottles covered with wet cloths, or by exposing porous vessels filled with liquid to the action of the air.

Although there are certain seasons, such as I have described, in which real hardships are undergone by an army in the field, yet it must be allowed that, for some part of the year, a camp life is by no means unpleasant, provided that a person keeps his health, and that the marches are not so rapid as to harass the troops, or to

prevent the officers from enjoying the sports of the field, for which most parts of India, in some shape or other, afford ample scope. But the heat during the day time, particularly in the tents of the soldiers, which, indeed, are perfect ovens at any season when the sun is out, renders Europeans liable to diseases of the liver, and all the minor attendant complaints, which, though they may not show themselves during active service, are sure to attack the troops when they come to halt.

While we were encamped in the neighbourhood of Poonah, we were joined by his Majesty's 78th and 84th regiments, two battalions of sepoys, and a proportion of artillery from Bombay. The former regiment, and a company of artillery, were attached to our force: the remainder were left in cantonments near Poonah. Here we were also joined by Major (now Sir John) Malcolm, an officer in the confidence of Marquis Wellesley, who continued with our force till the peace, as political agent on the part of the Governor-General.

About the beginning of July, the monsoon having to all appearance subsided, the army made a few marches in the direction of Ahmednaghur; but when within a march or two of that place, being overtaken by the rains, we were compelled to suspend our operations, and to seek, not shelter, for that was far distant, but such spots as were most favourable for encampment. The first notice we had of this last visit from the monsoon was by the sudden swell of a small river near which we were encamped, and in the bed of which the washermen of the army and their families had pitched their tents for the convenience of the water, which, when the rivers are apparently dry, is obtained by digging holes in the sand. As the flood came down in the night, a considerable number of these poor creatures were drowned, and most of the linen of the army was washed away, to the no small annoyance of the officers. The rapidity with which the rivers in the Peninsula of India are filled, can hardly be credited by those who have not witnessed it. Sometimes, even in fine weather, a stream will come down in a dense column, and fill the bed up to the brim, without

any warning but the noise occasioned by the rush of water. This is generally caused by a sudden heavy rain about the source of the river, or by the bursting of some embankment lying within its course.

Among the victims who fell a sacrifice to the hardships of this period, was Lieutenant Rowley of the engineers, a young man of the most amiable qualities and of first-rate talents. He was about six years my elder, and had considerable experience in his profession. While I naturally formed an attachment to him as my earliest companion in arms, I looked up to him as an example for imitation. To a steadiness above his years he joined an ardour and a zeal in his professional duties, which secured him the confidence and good-will of the general, who lent him one of his tents during his illness, as being more comfortable than his own, and who expressed great regret at his death. Poor fellow! he expired in my arms. To one so young as myself, and unaccustomed to such scenes, this could not but be a most painful circumstance; but, independently of this, I have always viewed a soldier's death, on any other than the bed of honour, as a most melancholy event. I could contemplate the havoc of battle with composure, for the field is a soldier's natural death-bed: but to see that manly frame, the energies of which would have been gladly exerted in its country's cause, wasting away by degrees; to see the soldier yielding by inches, and with painful reluctance, that life which he would willingly have surrendered in the field of battle; to see death, which he had openly defied perhaps in many a bloody field, stealing upon him unawares, has always been to me a painful sight. I followed my poor friend to the grave as chief mourner. There is a simplicity and a decency in a military burial, even in its plainest form, far surpassing in solemnity all the pomp and pageantry of the most sumptuous funeral in civil life. There, a number of hirelings, whose bodies only bear the garb of woe, while their countenances, gestures, and manner, betray indifference or a hackneyed observance of forms, render the last offices to the deceased; and a hired

vehicle, still smelling of its last inmate, bears the body to the grave, from which perhaps the bones of some old tenant of the sod are displaced to make room for the new one, destined in process of time to a similar ejectment. Here, the deceased soldier is borne to his last resting-place on the shoulders of his comrades; the flag, under which he has fought and died, is the pall which covers his remains; the sword and other emblems of his profession, which surmount the body, speak more than the most eloquent funeral oration to the heart of the spectator; the martial music, in solemn cadence, disposes the soul to suitable emotions; the fresh grave open, to receive its first offering; the short, but affecting, ritual is pronounced by the lips of a brother-soldier, perhaps in the faultering accents of friendship; and the last volley seems to announce the entrance of the immortal part into the portals of eternity.

CHAPTER VIII.

Cause of the War in 1803.—Siege of Ahmednaghur.—Attack of the Pettah.—Arab Soldiers.—The Author's feelings on first going into action.—Fatal Duel.—Remarks on Duelling.—Ahmednaghar.—Progress of the Seige.—Mode of lighting the walls with blue lights.—Erection of Batteries.—Mode pursued.—Stone Shot.—Fort surrenders.—Execution of two Sepoys for plundering.

As I am now about to detail the operations of General Wellesley's force in the celebrated war with the Mahrattas in 1803, it is proper that I should say a few words regarding its origin. The ostensible cause was the interference of the British in the re-establishment of the supremacy of the Paishwah, at which the Mahratta chieftains, Scindia and the Berar rajah, pretended to take umbrage; but the real cause was the growth of French influence among those powers, and the vast increase in numbers and discipline of their force under European adventurers. Monsieur Perron, who was in the service

of Scindia, had alone a force of about 20,000 infantry, regularly disciplined, with a large park of artillery, for the support of which he had a district allotted to him in the Deccan. It is clear that such a state of things could not exist without endangering our empire; therefore, however people may question the justice of going to war, no one can doubt the policy of seizing the first opportunity of breaking the neck of this formidable power.

About the beginning of August the weather cleared up, and on the 6th we opened the campaign in earnest, by investing the fortress of Ahmednaghur; previously to which it was necessary to dislodge the enemy from the pettah or town. Three columns of attack were formed for this object: the first, consisting of two companies of the 78th regiment, supported by a battalion of sepoys, under the command of Colonel Harness; the second, of two companies of the 74th regiment, similarly supported, under Colonel Wallace; and the third, of the flank companies of the 74th, supported by a battalion of sepoys, under Major Vesey. The first column was to make the principal attack, and was directed against what appeared to be the most assailable part of the wall. The second was to attack the gateway, and, if practicable, to endeavour to blow it open. The third column was directed against the south-west angle of the pettah, and was intended more as a feint than as a real attack. On a signal given, the first column moved forward gallantly, and presently placed their ladders against the wall; but, no sooner had a few men reached the top, than a stop was put to their progress; for it was found that the curtain was composed of a simple wall, without any *terre pleine*, so that the assailants could not enter the town without dropping from the wall, which, from its height, could not be attempted. In this situation the storming party remained exposed to a destructive flanking fire from the round towers, which were placed at intervals along the wall, and loop-holed from top to bottom, till a severe loss in officers and men compelled them to retire.

The general, perceiving that the principal attack did

not appear to succeed as he expected, ordered the third column, which was directed to halt out of musket-shot, to advance. It did so in good style; the men luckily placing their ladders against one of the towers, which they carried after a feeble resistance, and with no great loss, the greater part of the garrison having been called off to oppose the principal attack. The second column had, in the interim, endeavoured to force the gate; but, in the attempt, the artillery officer had been firing shot at it, instead of running up his gun and blowing it open. This, however, was unnecessary; for the third column, under Major Vesey, having entered the town, opened the gate to the rest, in doing which a poor sepoy of the 3d native infantry was killed by a shot from one of our guns fired at the gate, and found dead at the wicket. The garrison, being driven from the walls, retreated to the fort, not, however, without disputing the ground, in which they once or twice actually charged up to the bayonets of our Europeans. The troops employed against us on this occasion were chiefly Arabs, many of whom are kept in all the forts in this part of India, being particularly calculated for that kind of service. Though averse to discipline, they possess individually great courage, and are remarkable for their fidelity to those whom they serve. Being altogether mercenary troops, they may be seen on either side among opposing armies. This was the first time I had ever heard the whistling of balls. The reader will perhaps expect that I should exultingly exclaim with Charles the Twelfth, "Henceforth this shall be my music!" But candour obliges me to confess that such a noble idea did not enter my thoughts; for, however harmonious the balls may have sounded in the ear of the Swedish hero, to me they certainly did not convey the same degree of pleasure that I have since experienced from the voice of a Catalani, or from the bow of a Linley. On the contrary, the noise which they made, as they glanced past my head, raised about the precincts of my heart a kind of awkward sensation, not at all allied to pleasure, and partaking more of what is vulgarly called fear, but

which, as a military man, I dare not designate by that name.

Our loss on this occasion was severe. Among the killed was a Captain Grant of the 78th regiment, who, at the time of the attack, was under arrest for having been engaged in a duel with a brother officer, who fell in the encounter. The opponents had been intimate friends till the dispute which caused the fatal event. Such was the effect on Captain Grant that he became careless of life, and, although incapacitated by his situation for military duties, he courted death on the first opportunity, and was among the foremost that mounted the ladders. Thus were two officers of bravery and experience lost to the service from a mistaken sense of honour. Not that I mean altogether to condemn the practice of duelling; but on actual service it is the duty of a soldier to preserve his life for his country, and not to hazard it in personal encounter with his brother soldier. Where duty does not interfere, there are cases certainly in which the calls of honour are paramount, and in which a gentleman must expose his life for the good of society. But these are so rare, that the law very properly discountenances the practice of duelling. Still I must admit that I think it a necessary evil, and one to which society is more indebted for its present polish than to all the systems of ethics that have been promulgated from the foundation of the world. To this practice, handed down to us from the chivalric ages, may be principally ascribed that mutual forbearance and courtesy which distinguish the upper classes in these times from those of any preceding period, and which, naturally descending to the lower orders, has a beneficial effect upon the manners of the people. This may be fairly inferred, by comparing the public speeches of modern orators with those of the most eloquent among the ancients, which have been handed down to us, as well as by reference to the most famous poets of antiquity, whose heroes have invariably been bullies, with whom the tongue was a principal weapon. In short, there was then no such thing known as that most noble of all titles, a gentleman,

for which a man of honour is indebted to no one but himself; which it is in the power of every educated person, possessed of the means of clothing himself respectably, to acquire and maintain; which, bowing to nothing but to the law, and disowning all privileges but those of merit, makes the cadet fit company for the peer; and which, by breaking down the lofty barriers of aristocracy, and reducing the self-inflated pride of money, has shown itself eminently calculated to promote the cause of liberty and of civilization throughout the world. Having said thus much in defence of the practice of duelling, I may now add, that the good of which it may have been productive having had its full effect on society, it would be better if it were now altogether discontinued. Indeed, I am happy to observe that the practice is quite on the decline, and that better and more Christian principles are fast superseding the laws of honour.

Ahmednaghur was the principal hold of Scindia in this part of the Deccan; but a place of no great strength, the works consisting of a single wall strongly built of stone, and flanked with towers, having a deep dry ditch without any out-works. On the morning of the 9th the fortress was reconnoitred, and the south-west angle fixed on as the point of attack. The ground was a good deal broken thereabouts, and the approach was favoured by the dry bed of a nullah, which ran within about four hundred yards of the walls, and the banks of which afforded shelter from the fire of the enemy. During the night a battery for four iron 12 pounders was erected within about four hundred yards of the walls, and opened at daybreak. Our loss in constructing the battery was small, as the enemy were not aware of its exact situation, of which they could judge only by the noise, though several carcases were thrown in the endeavour to discover what we were about. The walls were also occasionally lit up with blue lights, which, extending round the whole circumference of the parapet, had a most beautiful and brilliant appearance. This was done, probably, in expectation of an assault, though, for any

other purpose, they were more injurious than useful to the besieged, as they could not illuminate the ground to any distance. Tom-toms, horns, and other loud martial instruments were occasionally sounded, to keep the garrison on the alert. The celerity with which batteries are erected by the English in India would astonish the regular stagers of Europe, who follow the old German system of Muller. In India no such rules are attended to. Nearly three times the number of hands allowed by Muller for the construction of a battery are allotted to the work; and, instead of a regular ditch being made in front of the parapet, as soon as the gabions are placed, the working party is set to fill up the coffre as fast as possible, by getting soil from any place where it can be most easily obtained. For this purpose a certain portion of the party is employed in digging where the soil is loosest, and the rest are posted in chains extending thence to the battery, to pass the baskets of earth as fast as they are filled. In this manner the coffre is generally filled in less than two hours. The most expert of the engineer department are then employed in laying the embrasures, and picketing the fascines; and the merlons of the battery are filled in the same manner as the coffre, persons standing on the top to receive and deposit the baskets of soil, and to ram down the earth. The battery is thus generally completed two or three hours before day-break. The platforms, of an ingenious construction, requiring but little time or labour in fixing them, are then laid; and the battery is given up to the artillery in time for them to run their guns in and to prepare for opening at day-break. While the work is going on, a picquet is posted in front of the battery in some broken ground (if such is to be found,) in order to oppose, or give warning of, any sortie on the part of the garrison. No doubt, if the enemy could ascertain the exact situation of the battery, so as to bring their guns to bear on it, the number of men employed in the work would occasion considerable loss. But even if the spot were discovered at night, it would be impossible for the artillery to lay their guns with sufficient precision in the

dark, so as materially to impede the work. But, when, as in Europe, the erection of a battery is prolonged to the second or third night, the enemy, by observing their practice during the day time, are enabled to bring their guns to bear effectually on it after dark when the work has recommenced. During the 10th our battery was employed principally in knocking off the defences of the fort, which answered our fire, but not so as to cause us any great loss. To prevent as much as possible the destruction of lives from the fire of the enemy, the practice is to post a man on the flank of the battery, whose business it is to give notice of every shot fired from such guns as are directed against the work at which he is stationed. He makes the signal the moment he perceives the flash of the gun, on which every man who happens to be exposed at the moment shelters himself till the shot has taken place or passed over. This however cannot always be done; for, where the fire is kept up with rapidity, or there are many guns engaged on each side, no effectual warning could be given, and the delay would be great. The mention of this practice reminds me of a circumstance which occurred during the siege of Seringapatam. It happened that one of those enormous engines, called Malabar guns, was fired at our works. The man stationed on the flank of the battery for the purpose above-mentioned, seeing the flash, gave the usual signal, "Shot!" A moment or two afterwards, seeing a large body taking its curving course through the air, he corrected himself by calling out "Shell!" As the ponderous missile (for it was an enormous stone-shot) approached, he could not tell what to make of it; and his astonishment vented itself in the exclamation of "Blood and ouns, mortar and all!"

On the night of the 10th our battery was lengthened for the howitzers, and an approach was carried from some broken ground in the rear to the bed of the nullah, whereby a tolerably secure communication was made between the camp and the battery, the flanks of which were extended so as to form a small parallel. During the 11th the heavy guns were employed in battering in

breach, while the howitzers were directed against the defences of the fort, or in opposing the fire of the enemy. Although towards evening the fire of our guns, as far as we could see, had made considerable impression on the wall, yet, as the glacis appeared to cover the revetement more than is usual in forts constructed by the natives of India, it was thought that our guns could not see sufficiently low to breach the wall effectually. It was therefore determined that during the night a lodgment should be made on the crest of the glacis immediately in front of the breach, which, if necessary, might be turned into a battery to complete the breach, if not already practicable, and which, at all events, would serve to bring a fire on the breach, and support the storming party in case of an assault. This lodgment was to be formed with sand-bags, which were to be brought by strong parties from the rear; and the duty allotted to me was to remain with a select party on the spot to see them properly deposited. This was doubtless a most dangerous piece of service, as the crest of the glacis was within pistol shot of the walls, from which a heavy fire would certainly be kept up. I confess I did not expect to survive it; so having a few hours to spare in the day, I employed myself in settling my little affairs, leaving a few tokens of affection to those I held dear, and commending my soul to God. Happily, however, just as we were going to work, an order came down to cease hostilities, as the fort had surrendered. Communications had been going on with the killedar during the day, but the operations had not been suspended, as our General knew the character of the natives too well to allow them to succeed in their usual object, that of gaining time, by which, as the weaker party, they are sure that nothing can be lost, while something may be won. On the morning of the 12th the garrison, consisting of about 1200 men, chiefly Arabs, marched out with the honours of war, and we took possession of the place.

Contrary to usage and good faith (for the fortress had not been taken by assault,) as well as in opposition to positive orders, some of the troops who had been ap-

pointed to take possession of the place dispersed for the purpose of plunder. Two sepoys of the third native infantry having been detected in the fact, were, by orders of the General, hung up on each side of the gateway; a measure which, it must be confessed, created some disgust at the moment, but which, at the outset of a campaign, was perhaps a necessary example for the saké of discipline, and a proper vindication of the British character for justice and good faith.

CHAPTER IX.

The Army quits Ahmednaghur—Crosses the Godavery river.—Arrives at Aurungabad.—Description of that place.—General Wellesley visits the Resident at Scindia's court, Colonel Collins. His equipage and appearance.—His opinion of the Mahratta Armies.—Wretched state of the country.—Famine.—Conduct of the natives under their misery.—Deplorable scene witnessed by the Author.—Colonel Stevenson attacks and takes the fort of Jaulna.—The enemy's cavalry get into our rear.—Countermarches in consequence.—The enemy's infantry and guns ascend the Adjuntee Pass.—Colonel Stevenson surprises their horse camp.—Joined by a convoy of provisions.—The Army moves forward.—The enemy's cavalry effect a junction with their infantry.—The two British divisions arrive within a short distance of each other.—Nizam's subsidiary force reviewed by General Wellesley.—Colonel Stevenson.—Company's officers of rank compared with those of his Majesty.

Having supplied the fort of Ahmednaghur with an adequate garrison, the army continued its advance into the Mahratta territories, and on the 29th August reached the banks of the Godavery, a river which traverses the peninsula from west to east, of about the same size as the Kistnah, and held equally sacred by Hindoo superstition. On the 27th, having arrived within a few miles of the city of Aurungabad, the General proceeded to that place in order to hold a conference with Colonel Collins, the late British resident at Scindia's court. As usual on such occasions, I joined the *cortége*. On our way to the encampment of the Resident we

passed through the town of Aurungabad, which was the largest city I had seen since we quitted Poonah. As its name betokens, it was founded by Aurungzebe, and was, during the latter years of his life, the chief residence of that monarch. It possesses no buildings of any consequence that I can call to mind, except a mausoleum erected over the remains of one of the founder's daughters. It is a beautiful structure, entirely of white marble, justly admired for the elegance of its design, and for the skill and delicacy displayed in its execution, particularly in the fretted work of which its walls are mostly composed.

On reaching the tent of the Resident we were unexpectedly received with a salute of artillery, for such was the state maintained by this representative of John Company (known in Bengal by the nickname of King Collins,) that he had a brigade of field-pieces, worked by native artillery-men, attached to his escort. In front of a noble suite of tents, which might have served for the Great Mogul, we were received by an insignificant, little, old-looking man, dressed in an old-fashioned military coat, white breeches, sky-blue silk stockings, and large glaring buckles to his shoes, having his highly powdered wig, from which depended a pig-tail of no ordinary dimensions, surmounted by a small round black silk hat, ornamented with a single black ostrich feather, looking altogether not unlike a monkey dressed up for Bartholomew fair. There was, however, a fire in his small black eye, shooting out from beneath a large, shaggy, pent-house brow, which more than counterbalanced the ridicule that his first appearance naturally excited. After the usual compliments, the principals retired into an inner tent, where matters not to be entrusted to vulgar ears were discussed. But the last words uttered by the little man, as they came forth from the tent, I well recollect. "I tell you, General, as to their cavalry (meaning the enemy's) you may ride over them wherever you meet them; but their infantry and guns will astonish you." As, in riding homewards we amused ourselves, the General among the rest, in cutting jokes at the expense

of "little King Collins," we little thought how true his words would prove.

From the time we quitted Poonah all signs of cultivation ceased. The villages were mostly deserted, and such of the inhabitants as remained were exposed to all the horrors of famine. These forlorn wretches, of whom some, perhaps, had refused to emigrate, from an obstinate attachment to the soil of their birth, while others had lingered in hope till they had not strength to move, might be seen hovering round their dismantled dwellings in different degrees of exhaustion, from the first cravings of hunger to the later and more passive dejection of long privation. But still, amidst all this wretchedness, there was nothing of violence in their despair. The victims seemed to await the approach of death with patience and resignation, if not with apathy. Whether this was the natural consequence of their situation, their mental energies having gradually sunk with their corporeal strength, or whether it proceeded from the character of the "meek Hindoo," I cannot pretend to decide; but this silent wretchedness gave, if possible, an additional gloom to a scene already truly heart-rending. This patience under suffering, this composure, and even *sang froid*, within the jaws of death, are prominent characteristics of the Hindoo, and ought, indeed, to put to shame those among their conquerors, who, boasting higher attributes of courage and virtue, pretend to look down upon them with contempt. No one meets death with less apparent dread than the Hindoo; and when imbued with a sense of honour, as among the military casts, no one can display more heroism. I have repeatedly seen them refuse quarter, when the European would have courted mercy even in chains. Wherefore, then, are we always victorious in our contests with them? It cannot proceed, in every instance, from superiority in the art of war, for bodies of troops must sometimes clash in such a way that discipline can avail neither party. The truth lies in this, that the courage of the Hindoo is of a passive nature, while that of the European is active; the former being inert, has only its own

weight to give it power; the latter has activity to increase its momentum.

Numberless were the spectacles of woe which we witnessed at this period. One in particular has been so deeply imprinted on my memory, that centuries of life would not efface it. Being detached one day on duty to some distance from the camp, and returning home late, having outstripped my escort, I was unfortunate enough to lose my way. Night overtook me in this unpleasant predicament, when, finding myself near one of those forlorn villages, I rode up to it to inquire my road. The moon had just risen, and showed me a group of famished wretches seated under the walls of the village, surrounded by the mortal remains of those, who, happily for them, had already preceded their comrades in the agonies of death, and whose earthly sufferings were closed. As I approached, packs of jackals, preying on the wasted bodies of the latter even before the eyes of the helpless survivors, ran howling away at the sound of my horse's feet—their instinct teaching them that I was a different kind of being from those scarcely living wretches whom they viewed more with greediness than fear—while the vulture, rising reluctantly from his bloody banquet, flapped his broad wings in anger, and joined the wild chorus with discordant cries. The moon's pale light shed a suitably mournful tint over such a scene. Viewed in its silver beams, the dark bloodless countenances of the melancholy group assumed a hue perfectly unearthly, and which I can only compare to that in which the prince of darkness is painted by the imagination of youth; while their sunken eyes, hallow stomachs, and emaciated frames, spoke the extremity of their wretchedness. I addressed a few words to them; but the only answer I obtained was a sigh, accompanied by a mournful shake of the head, betokening the want of strength even to give utterance to speech. To urge them farther, or to intrude on them my worldly wants, would, I thought, have been a cruel mockery of their state; so I hastened from a scene where my presence could not afford either consolation or relief.

Numbers of famishing wretches followed our army for the sole purpose of existing on the offal of the camp. Scarcely were the cavalry lines cleared for the march, when crowds might be seen rushing towards the spot to gather from the dung of the horses such scanty portions of grain as had passed undigested through their bodies; while, to the honour of these poor sufferers be it spoken, scarcely any would, even to save their lives, so far trespass on their religious prejudices as to appease their hunger with the flesh of the many bullocks which, after every day's march, were left dying or dead on the ground.

On the 2d of September, Colonel Stevenson attacked and took the small fort of Jaulna, without much loss. We were sufficiently near to hear the guns fired on that occasion.

During the campaign I was in the habit of keeping a regular Journal of our operations (a practice which I would warmly recommend to every young person similarly situated,) but this having unfortunately been lost, I am compelled to draw on a bad memory for materials to compose this part of my memoirs. It is true that I might apply to other sources to make up the deficiency, but by this means my narrative would probably lose a good deal of that freshness and originality in which lies the chief interest of such works. All, therefore, that I can recollect of this period is, that we made several marches and countermarches, owing, I believe, to the movements of a large body of cavalry which Scindia and the Berar Rajah had detached to manœuvre on our rear, in order to favour the advance of a large body of infantry and guns which were then in full march from the Deccan, or to divert us from advancing into the heart of their territories, by threatening our communications, and by menacing the Nizam's capital of Hydrabad. In a part of their object they seem to have succeeded; for while we were endeavouring to counteract the movements of their cavalry, their infantry and artillery were enabled to ascend the Adjuntee pass. This manœuvre of their cavalry was not, however, accomplished without

some loss on their part; for on the 9th of September Colonel Stevenson succeeded by a rapid night march in surprising their camp, and although the loss they sustained on that occasion may not have been very great, still it must have left on them such an impression of the superiority of our discipline and valour as to have had a powerful influence on their subsequent conduct in the field. Having failed to intercept any part of our supplies, the last convoy of which joined us on the 18th September, escorted by a battalion of the 4th native infantry under Colonel Hill, the enemy concentrated their force in the neighbourhood of Jafferabad, to which point the two British divisions now directed their march.

I recollect that about this period I was at breakfast with the General, when a dispatch was brought to him from an officer in command of a small detachment. After reading it he burst into a laugh, and, throwing it down on the table, asked us if we could tell him where "so many miles *on this* side of such a place" was; for that was the manner in which the writer intended to convey a notion of the position he was in. We need not say from which side of the Irish Channel he came.

On the 21st of September, the Nizam's subsidiary being within two miles of our division, the General rode over to inspect them, and to concert with Colonel Stevenson the operations to be pursued. This division, which was in numerical force about the same as ours, though inferior as to Europeans (having only one King's regiment,) appeared in excellent order. The battalions, which, as belonging to a subsidiary force, had been kept up on the war establishment, were much superior in strength to those of our division.

Colonel Stevenson was an officer of considerable experience and talent, well known in the wars with Hyder and Tippoo, and who, in the campaign against Dhoondiah Waugh, had acted in concert with General Wellesley. Unfortunately Colonel Stevenson's health had been for some time on the decline; and, without impairing the vigor of his mind, it prevented his displaying that personal activity which had distinguished him in his

earlier campaigns. In fact, this is a disadvantage under which the Company's officers of rank must often labour, when compared with those of his Majesty's service, who through favour or fortune have been raised to command while in the prime of life, and with constitutions unimpaired—qualifications sufficient to counterbalance even the advantages of experience.

CHAPTER X.

General Wellesley separates the two British Divisions.—Question whether he was right in so doing.—Find ourselves unexpectedly within a few miles of the Enemy's Camp.—Their Position.—The General resolves to attack them.—His excellent dispositions for that purpose.—Battle of Assaye.—Anecdotes connected with it.

Our force being thus united and in face of a powerful enemy, it is a question how far General Wellesley was justified in dividing his army at this juncture. Indeed, had he then possessed the experience he afterwards obtained of the discipline of Scindia's infantry, and of the efficiency of his artillery, or had he relied sufficiently on the information given him by Colonel Collins, I much doubt whether he would have ventured on so hazardous a step. The truth is, I believe, that he had obtained information on which he thought he could rely, that, notwithstanding the late forward movement of Scindia, the confederate sovereigns had come to the resolution of retiring, in order to form a junction with the Berar Rajah's infantry and guns previously to giving battle; and conceiving, I suppose, that either division of his army was capable of coping with the enemy's force when in retreat, he determined by a rapid movement on each flank, to prevent the possibility of their gaining any of the passes in the range of hills which separated them from Berar in time to save their artillery; while both divisions were to attack them on the 24th, should they think proper to remain where they were.

But in any case the manœuvre was a dangerous one; for it was in the power of the enemy, if not altogether bent on retreat, to throw, by a lateral movement, the whole of their force on either of the British divisions. Fortune, indeed, seems to have effected this for them without any movement on their part; for, on arriving at the village of Nulniah, after a march of fourteen miles, on the morning of the 23d of September, we found ourselves within about five miles of the enemy's camp, instead of ten, as we expected. It is true we were nearly that distance from the town of Jafferabad, where Scindia's army was said to be posted; but then their army, which occupied a considerable space, had its right not less than three miles from that place. By these means we were not only five miles nearer to the enemy than it was calculated we should have been from the information received, but Colonel Stevenson was, for the same reason, that distance farther off than he ought to have been. Finding matters in this predicament, and, hearing that the enemy were breaking up their camp (which must have been either for the purpose of retreat, or for attacking us,) I think the General was quite right in moving on to the attack. After he had come to this determination, nothing could be more masterly than his dispositions for the battle, nor could any thing surpass the promptitude and decision with which he carried them into effect. On arriving at the village of Nulniah, where we were to have halted that day, the Quarter-master-general had, as usual, marked out the camp, and I was employed in my customary duty of surveying the ground, when an order came to withdraw the camp colours, as the division was moving onwards. Galloping up to the column, which had re-commenced its march, I soon ascertained the cause. As I passed the old 19th dragoons, whose veteran eyes sparkled at the idea of being at the old work again, I was hailed by a friend, "My lad," said he, "your maiden sword will be well blooded to-day." These words made a deep impression on my mind, for they were the last I heard him utter. He fell nobly, at the head of his squadron.

About 12 o'clock we came in sight of the enemy from a high ground, about a mile and a half in front of their camp. They appeared to be then in the act of striking their tents, and had not as yet taken up any military position. Their encampment extended about two miles between the rivers Kailna and Jouah, which, running parallel to each other, about a mile apart, joined about a mile and a half below their left. The space comprehended in this parallelogram seemed to be covered by one living mass, compared to which our handful of men (for we had but 4,500 British troops in action, one battalion and the rear-guard having been left to guard the baggage and stores at Nulniah,) was but as a drop to the ocean. As soon as their tents had disappeared, we observed their infantry drawn up in two lines parallel to the above-mentioned rivers, the left of their second line resting on the village of Assaye, which was only a short distance from the river Jouah, while their cavalry was formed in large masses on the right, extending as far as the village of Bokerdun.

Having viewed their position for a short time, the General resolved upon attacking their left wing in flank, hoping, by these means, to compensate, in some measure, for the smallness of his numbers, and to be able to throw their infantry and artillery into confusion before they could form a front to oppose him; while his own flanks, being covered by the two rivers, which, from the scarped nature of their banks, could be crossed by cavalry only at a few spots, the enemy's horse could not be brought into action without passing through their infantry, a measure which, if attempted, would, in all probability, throw their whole army into irreparable confusion. In conformity with this skilful manœuvre, the column of infantry was directed towards a pass which crossed the river Kailna about half a mile below the enemy's left wing, while the cavalry remained posted on the height where we first came in sight of the enemy, to keep in check two large masses of horse, which, having passed the Kailna, had posted themselves about half a mile in our front. I was particularly struck at this

time with the beauty of the line formed by our cavalry, and with the steady movement of the column of infantry, so unlike the usual order of march. It seemed as if each individual felt that this was to be the test of discipline against numbers, and that nothing but the utmost steadiness and determination could make up for the appalling disparity of force, of which, from the view we had of the enemy's army, every one had an opportunity of judging. Not a whisper was heard through the ranks; our nerves were wound up to the proper pitch, and every one seemed to know and to feel that there was no alternative but death or victory. Under such circumstances it might reasonably be supposed that even fear would make a man brave.

As the infantry approached the river, the enemy's guns opened on it, but without much effect. No sooner, however, did the head of the column begin to ascend the opposite bank, than it was met by a shower of shot from a battery advanced near the bank of the river for that purpose, which, continuing without intermission, caused us severe loss. At this time the General's orderly dragoon had the top of his head carried off by a cannon ball, but the body being kept in its seat by the valise, holsters, and other appendages of a cavalry saddle, it was some time before the terrified horse could rid himself of the ghastly burden, in the endeavour to effect which he kicked and plunged, and dashed the poor man's brains in our faces, to our no small danger and annoyance.

This was rather an ugly beginning I thought. Being ordered forward to examine the ground in the direction of the enemy, and to observe his movements, I had scarcely put my horse into a gallop, when, in passing some broken ground, I unkennelled a fox, who, giving his brush a swing of defiance, set off in the direction of the enemy. "Oho!" my lad, said I, "on any other occasion you would not have got off so easily." Pursuing my way, I passed close to and within the enemy's videttes; when, feeling for my sword, in case it should be necessary, I found that I was without arms. I had left it

with my horse-keeper. It mattered not, however, for they were too much intent on their own business to meddle with me. On gaining the top of the high ground between the two rivers, I observed the enemy's infantry in the act of changing their front, and taking up a new position, with their right to the river Kailna and their left on the village of Assaye. This manœuvre they were performing in the most steady manner possible, though not exactly according to Dundas; for each battalion came up into the new alignement in line, the whole body thus executing a kind of echellon movement on a large scale. On returning to report this to the General, I found that, not supposing the enemy to be capable of such a manœuvre in the face of an attacking force, he had, in conformity with his original intention of attacking them in flank, already formed the infantry in two lines; while the cavalry, which, as soon as the infantry had crossed the river, had quitted its first position at a rapid pace, was drawn up as a reserve in the rear. The Mysore and Paishwah's horse were left on the opposite bank of the river to observe the movements of the enemy's cavalry, and to prevent their crossing at the pass in our rear.

As the enemy's guns came into position, they opened a well-directed fire on our little army, which, being drawn up in three lines, besides one of ammunition-tumbrils, presented a sure mark for their shot, which, if they passed over one line, were certain to take effect in another. As soon as the General was informed of the alteration in the enemy's position, he changed his order of battle, and, with the view of extending his front, ordered the picquets of infantry, which formed the right of the first line, to take ground to the right, so as to leave room for the two battalions of the second line to come up, while the 74th regiment, which was on the right of the second line, was ordered to oblique and form on the right of the picquets; the cavalry being, at the same time, directed to file to the right as far as the river Jouah. Before this movement could be effected, however, the fire of the enemy's artillery became so destructive that

no troops could long stand exposed to it. Indeed, not a moment was to be lost in closing with the enemy; for already had some confusion been occasioned by the gun-bullocks and their drivers, who, unaccustomed to such work, had shown a disposition to do any thing but remain stationary; while several field-pieces, which had been advanced to oppose those of the enemy, were already put *hors de combat*. The order, therefore, was given to move forward: the second line was directed to complete its movement during the advance; and the cavalry to support our right wing, which was, of course, considerably outflanked. The two battalions of the second line were not long in taking their place in front; but, owing to the oblique movement of the picquets being continued too long, not only was the 74th regiment prevented from gaining their flank, but these two weak battalions, on approaching the enemy's position, found themselves at a considerable distance from the rest of our infantry, and confronted by the whole of the enemy's left wing. This opening in the line was rendered still greater in consequence of the sepoy battalions, in the endeavour to avoid the fire of the enemy's centre, having crowded in on the 78th regiment which formed our extreme left. At this time the fire of the enemy's artillery became, indeed, most dreadful. In the space of less than a mile, 100 guns, worked with skill and rapidity, vomited forth death into our feeble ranks. It cannot, then, be a matter of surprise if, in many cases, the sepoys should have taken advantage of any irregularities in the ground to shelter themselves from the deadly shower, or that even, in some few instances, not all the endeavours of the officers could persuade them to move forward. Notwithstanding this, the main body of the infantry continued to advance rapidly and in good order, and were not long in coming in contact with the enemy's right wing, which they forced through without difficulty, their infantry standing no longer than the guns fired, which, however, they did to the last, many of the *golumdauze* having been bayoneted in the act of loading their pieces.

In the mean time the picquets, on arriving within grape-

shot distance of the enemy, had been so roughly handled, that they hesitated to advance, while the 74th regiment, which was in their rear, was prevented from charging, as no doubt this gallant regiment would have done, notwithstanding the disparity of numbers, had its front only been clear. Matters, however, remained not long in this state; for the picquets, retiring in confusion on the 74th (as might have been expected,) left it exposed to the whole fire of the enemy's left wing, while a chosen body of horse, suddenly wheeling round the village of Assaye, charged it in flank, and almost completed the destruction of this gallant band, which, though now reduced to the strength of not more than a good company, still clung round its colours, undaunted and unbroken. At this critical moment the cavalry under Colonel Maxwell, which had been directed to act according to circumstances, advanced rapidly over the ground where the 74th and picquets had been engaged, and charged through the enemy's left wing, under a shower of musketry and grape.

Previously to this, however, the main body of our infantry, having, as I said before, forced its way through the enemy's right wing (several of the battalions of which had rather wheeled back on the centre of their line than been actually beaten off the field,) found itself, though victorious, in rather an awkward situation. Being compelled to bring up its left shoulder, for the purpose of attacking the enemy's reserve, which was posted near the river Jouah, its left flank became, of necessity, exposed to the enemy's cavalry, and its right to the fire of their centre, which had faced about for that purpose; while, from the non-appearance of the 74th and picquets, the General, who had advanced with the left wing, began to entertain serious apprehensions for their safety. "What is our cavalry about now?" every one exclaimed. But the words were scarcely out of our mouths when we saw them, headed by the gallant 19th, come pouring through the enemy's left wing like a torrent that had burst its banks, bearing along the broken and scattered materials which had opposed it. This

was a noble sight, and to persons in our situation a most gratifying one. The whole of our line hailed it with a shout of triumph, and, advancing at double quick time, charged the enemy's reserve, and drove it across the Jouah. Elated with their success, the sepoys now began to disperse in pursuit of the enemy; but happily the 78th stood their ground firmly, and thus prevented the enemy's horse, which still threatened our left wing, from taking advantage of this imprudence. The recall being sounded, the infantry was formed on the bank of the river, while the cavalry continued the pursuit of the flying foe.

In the mean time the enemy's centre, which had remained untouched, closed in upon the ground before occupied by their left wing, and, uniting with such of their artillery and infantry as had been passed over unhurt by our cavalry, formed itself into a kind of crescent, with its right horn resting on the river Jouah, and its left on the village of Assaye; thus presenting themselves in a fresh position on the flank of our infantry, on which, having collected a considerable number of their guns, they re-commenced a heavy fire. The battle was now to be fought over again, with this difference, that the contending forces had exchanged sides; and, had the enemy's horse behaved with the least spirit, while our cavalry was absent in pursuit of their broken battalions, there is no guessing what the consequence might have been; but, happily for us, they kept aloof. To oppose the enemy in their new position, the sepoy battalion on the right was immediately formed *en potence*, and advanced against them, but without effect, being compelled to retire. Another was brought forward, and equally repulsed. Our cavalry, having, by this time, returned from the pursuit, and formed on our left, and the enemy's horse having disappeared before them, the general ordered the 78th regiment and 7th cavalry up to head a fresh attack against the enemy's infantry and guns, which still defended their position with obstinacy. No sooner, however, had he formed the 78th regiment in line, in directing which his horse's leg was

carried off by a cannon-shot, than the enemy, without awaiting the attack, commenced their retreat across the Jouah, which they passed in tolerable order before our troops could come up with them. Previously to this last attack, Colonel Maxwell had requested, and obtained, permission, to attack a considerable body of infantry and guns, which, having formed part of the reserve, were seen retiring in good order along the right bank of the Jouah. Wishing to be a close witness of a charge of cavalry, I could not let slip such an opportunity; so, seizing a sword which the General's horse-keeper had picked up on the field, I fell in among the files of the 19th dragoons. We were not long in coming up with the enemy, who, having formed with their left to the Jouah, steadily awaited our approach. The charge was sounded: we advanced with rapidity, amidst a shower of musketry and grape, which latter I could actually hear rattling among our ranks, and had already got almost within reach of the bayonets of the enemy, who still gallantly stood their ground, when, instead of dashing among their ranks, I suddenly found my horse swept round as it were by an eddy torrent. Away we galloped, right shoulders forward, along the whole of the enemy's line, receiving their fire as we passed, till, having turned our backs upon them, we took to our heels manfully, every one calling out, "Halt! halt!" while nobody would set the example; till at last, a trumpet having sounded, we pulled up, but in complete disorder, dragoons and native cavalry pell-mell. On this occasion Colonel Maxwell fell pierced by a grape-shot. He was gallantly leading the charge, when he received his death-blow. Having involuntarily checked his horse, and thrown his arm back, when he received his wound, the soldiers immediately behind him, not knowing the cause, mistook the gesture for a signal to retire, and did so accordingly. At least, this was the reason afterwards assigned for the failure; and, if true, it shows how the fate of armies, and even of nations, may depend upon the direction of a single shot. Another second or two, and we should have completed the overthrow of our op-

ponents, who could not possibly have withstood the charge, drawn up as they were in line. Indeed, so near were we to them at the time we turned about, that several of the squadron officers, whose position is in front, had their horses wounded with bayonets. If I might be allowed to judge, I should say that the failure was chiefly owing to the manner in which we advanced against the enemy, having approached obliquely instead of directly perpendicular to their front, as we ought to have done; by which means we glanced, as it were, past their line.

Thus closed this memorable battle, one of the most bloody on record to the victors. Out of about 4,500 men in action, upwards of 2,000 were either killed or wounded, the former amounting to more than a third of the whole number, a circumstance unprecedented in warfare, though easily accounted for by the fact that the wounds were mostly inflicted by artillery.

Although the Mysore and Paishwah's horse took no active part in the action, still the position in which they were placed, and the good countenance they maintained, prevented the enemy's cavalry from getting into our rear in any force. Some straggling parties, nevertheless, succeeded in crossing the river, and cutting up such of our artillery as had not advanced with the line. Four officers of that corps and a considerable number of men were sabred at their guns. By a signal act of perfidy several were decoyed from under the gun-carriages, where they had sought refuge, with offers of quarter, and there inhumanly butchered.

Among the slain I cannot help particularizing Captain Mackay of the 4th native cavalry, commissary of cattle to the army. He had previously asked permission of the General to head his squadron in case of an action, and had been positively refused. Instead, however, of remaining with the baggage, as others similarly circumstanced did, by a noble act of disobedience he risked his commission and lost his life.

Another, though not so fatal instance of the prevalence of honour over duty, deserves to be recorded.

Lieutenant Serle, of the 19th dragoons, who was under an arrest at the time of the action for some disagreement with his commanding officer, joined his corps at the commencement of the battle, strictly speaking, in defiance of authority (for according to military rule he then broke his arrest,) and, by his distinguished gallantry regained permission, without being put on his trial, again to wear that sword which he had so nobly used against the enemies of his country.

In the course of the action I was twice struck by shot, but not in such a manner as to be returned on the list of wounded. The first was a graze in the wrist, which cut through my coat and shirt, but carried away only a small portion of my skin. The next was from a spent grape-shot, which hit me in the pit of the stomach, so as to take away my breath. This, with the fright, caused me nearly to fall from my horse. I thought, of course, that I was shot through the body; and, not liking to stoop my head for fear of driving the ball in farther, I groped about with my hand for the hole, when, not finding any, I ventured to look down, and could hardly believe that I had escaped my death-wound; though, as it may be supposed, I was not a little pleased to find that I was more frightened than hurt. During the hottest fire I observed several sepoys, who were either wounded or pretended to be so, crouching down with their backs to the enemy, in such a manner, that their knapsacks completely sheltered them from every thing but round shot. The Europeans had not this advantage, their packs being always carried for them in India; but whenever they had them I never observed that they had ingenuity enough to make use of them in this way.

What was the enemy's loss in men we could not ascertain; but it could not have been very great; for the number of the assailants was insufficient to have done much execution in their ranks. What was, however, of infinitely more consequence, their battalions were dispersed and disheartened, while a noble park of artillery, consisting of upwards of a hundred guns, and several standards, were the trophies of this victory.

These latter were chiefly picked up by the pioneers when burying the dead. Not seeing any intrinsic value in them they had given them to their wives to make petticoats of; from which ignoble purpose they were rescued to hang as memorials of British prowess in the church of Fort St. George, and perhaps from the dome of St. Paul's.

The greatest part of Scindia's regular infantry, to the number of at least 12,000, were present in this action, by which a death-blow was given to that formidable force which had been disciplined by Perron, and officered chiefly by French, whose presence and influence in the Mahratta armies was the chief cause of the war. Perron himself was not present, having, with many others, accepted the offers of the supreme government to retire under the protection of the East India Company. Their infantry was on this occasion commanded by a Major Pohlman, a German, who had, I believe, not many European officers under him. One only was found dead on the field. Nothing could surpass the skill or bravery displayed by their golumdauze, as our loss fully testified. When taken, their guns were all found laid a few degrees below the point-blank, just what they ought to be for the discharge of grape or cannister at a short distance; while, so rapid was their fire, that the officers left behind with the baggage, and who were out of the sound of small arms, could not compare the report of the guns to any thing less than the rolling of musketry. The pieces, which were cast under the direction of Europeans, were all of the best kind, and equipped in the most efficient manner. What force of cavalry they had in the field we could not ascertain; but this was of little moment, for, excepting the body which charged the 74th regiment, they acted like cowards. They could not, however, have had less than 30,000 horses on the ground.

Towards the end of the action several of the enemy's ammunition tumbrils, in which it is supposed they had left slow matches burning, blew up; these dreadful explosions, without doing much mischief, added not a little to the horror of the scene.

The action was not over till sunset, although nothing like pursuit was attempted. Indeed we were sufficiently satisfied with the victory we had achieved, being too much fatigued with the day's work (for we had marched twenty miles previously to coming into action,) and too much taken up with attending to our wounded, to think of any thing else. I never shall forget the rush that was made for the river as soon as our safety would admit of the soldiers leaving their ranks: here, notwithstanding that its scanty waters, from the number of the enemy killed in crossing its bed, were completely tinged with blood, few, among whom I cannot reckon myself, could resist the temptation to quench their burning thirst. This insatiable desire to imbibe liquid, accompanied by an almost equally strong disposition to get rid of it, I have observed to be a never-failing concomitant of danger, which, I suppose, causes the feeling of fear (or anxiety, if you will have it) thus to operate on certain organs of the frame. So instinctively do the old soldiers feel this, that, on crossing the river previously to the action, I remarked that they not only compelled the *puckauly* man* to fill his bags, but actually put a guard over him, with directions to bayonet him if he did not keep up with his company.

During the heat of action, and in the flush of victory, the mind could not dwell on the passing scene; but when we had time to breathe and to look around us, the sight was indeed a melancholy one, notwithstanding the trophies with which we were surrounded. On passing over the ground where the 74th and picquets had been engaged, the carnage was dreadful, and the wounds inflicted by the swords of the enemy's cavalry were such as I could have had no conception of. This was the only time I ever saw heads fairly cut off. Such a thing could not be done by our cavalry swords in their usual state; for, however good the material may be, the constant drawing in and out of an iron scabbard soon blunts

* A man with a bullock, carrying leather bags to contain water, attached to each company of soldiers.

the edge; whereas those of the native horsemen, though seldom of such good stuff as ours, by never being drawn except for use, or for the purpose of being cleaned, are capable of inflicting a wound of ten times the depth, particularly when applied in the drawing manner usually practised by the Indian swordsmen.

At this spot I witnessed a scene which I shall not easily forget. I was riding among the bodies of the poor 74th along with Captain (now Sir Colin) Campbell, who had a brother in that regiment, of whose fate he was ignorant, till he saw his corpse extended on the ground. The shock to his feelings, and the scene that followed, may be better conceived than described. This, I believe, was his only remaining brother of a large family who had all fallen in their country's cause. It has not been the fault of Sir Colin that he has survived to wear his well-earned laurels. He was but a subaltern at the storm of the pettah of Ahmednaghur, where his distinguished gallantry attracting the notice of the General, he made him his brigade-major. Sir Colin is now a Major-general and K.C.B., while I am but a half-pay Captain. "*Fortune de la guerre!*" as the French say. But he is the last man I would envy. He is a good fellow, and long may he live to be an honour to his profession! As a set off to this affecting circumstance, I must describe a ludicrous scene which occurred about the same time, and which for a moment caused a ray of hilarity to cheer the gloom of the battle-field. A surgeon, whose bandages had been exhausted by the number of patients, espying one of the enemy's horsemen lying, as he supposed, dead on the ground, with a fine long girdle of cotton cloth round his waist, seized the end of it, and, rolling over the body, began to loose the folds. Just as he had nearly accomplished his purpose, up sprang the dead man, and away ran the doctor, both taking to their heels on opposite tacks, to the infinite amusement of the by-standers. This extraordinary instance of a doctor bringing a man to life, so opposite to the usual practice of the faculty, became the subject of a caricature; while the story as may be supposed, long

clung to this unfortunate son of Galen, who afterwards went by the name of " the resurrection doctor."

Shortly after sunset there was an alarm which put us all on the alert. It arose from the sudden appearance of a body of horse, which had advanced under cover of a fog, to within a short distance of our line. They were a part of Scindia's cavalry, which had been absent during the action, and were attracted by the firing to the field of battle. Finding how matters stood, they sheered off, and left us to our repose, if that could be called repose which was spent among the dying and the dead. As to myself, I lay down with my horse's bridle in my hand, close to an officer of the 74th, who had lost his leg. He appeared in good spirits considering his situation, and was so kind as to offer me a share of some brandy which his servant had brought up. In the morning I turned round to repeat my thanks for his kindness, and to inquire after his wound. He was a corpse!

The enemy, as we afterwards learned, had not passed the night so quietly; for, as it often happens in these cases, particularly with irregular troops, a panic seized them after dark, supposing us to be in pursuit, and they never stopped till they were safe at the bottom of the Adjuntee pass, having abandoned the only two guns which they carried off the field, and a considerable part of their baggage, which were afterwards picked up by Colonel Stevenson's division.

CHAPTER XI.

Feelings after the Battle.—Skeletons of the Regiments on Parade. Sale of Officers' effects.—Joined by Colonel Stevenson's corps. Scindia sues for peace.—Colonel Stevenson takes possession of Burhampoor.—Lays siege to Asseerghur.—General Wellesley's division descends the Adjuntee pass, and enters Berar.—Description of the country.—Wild hog hunting.—Asseerghur surrenders. Enemy's Cavalry get into our rear, and endeavour to intercept our Convoys.—General Wellesley's division re-ascends the Adjuntee pass in consequence.—Captain Baynes, commanding the Convoy, repulses the attack of the Enemy.—Is joined by General Wellesley's division.—Brinsaries, and some account of them. Scindia's Vakeels arrive in our Camp, and negociations set on foot.—Descent into Berar by the Bajoora pass.—A Suspension of Arms agreed upon with Scindia.

The morning after the action, such of the division as were left alive drew off from the field of battle, and encamped on the spot where we first came in sight of the enemy, the pioneers being left to bury the dead. To see the skeletons of the battalions on parade the same evening was a melancholy sight; while the incessant thumpings of the auctioneer's hammer, in disposing of the poor officers' effects, which continued for some days, even after we had bidden adieu to the field of battle and resumed our march, kept constantly reminding us of the loss of a brother officer, a relation, or a friend. Candour, however, obliges me to confess, that scenes like these appear worse on paper than they are in reality, so true is that maxim of Rochefoucault's, "*Dans les malheurs de nos amis il y a toujours quelque chose qui nous plait.*" There is, in the first place, the happiness of having escaped unhurt; in the next, there is the glory gained, and the feeling of security acquired by the knowledge that your enemy is beaten and disheartened; and "though last not least," there is the certain promotion to be expected by the number of vacancies occa-

sioned; all which mundane feelings contribute to make a camp, even after a bloody victory, any thing but a scene of mourning and tribulation, as our more sensitive readers might, very naturally, suppose it to be. Doubtless the case would be different with a defeated army; but this it has not been my fortune to prove.

On the evening of the 24th we were joined by the division under Colonel Stevenson. They had heard the firing of the artillery on the day of battle, and the Colonel immediately broke up his camp with the intention of joining us; but, not being able for some time to obtain any certain information of our position or of the state of affairs, he had experienced considerable delay. Had he been fortunate enough to gain correct intelligence of the defeat of the enemy, and of the direction of their retreat, he might easily have effected the total dispersion of their force, and captured the whole of their baggage. The next morning his division set off in pursuit of the enemy, and, late as they were, they succeeded in taking the only two guns which they had been able to carry off the field, and some portion of their baggage, as I have already related.

On the 25th we bade adieu to the remains of our slaughtered countrymen, and brother soldiers, and marched to a small fort which had been abandoned by the enemy, where, having halted a day or two for the purpose of establishing a field-hospital, our division was again put in motion.

In the beginning of October the General received a notification from Scindia of his disposition to treat for peace, provided our chief would agree to a suspension of hostilities, and forward to his camp two persons, one on the part of the British Government, and the other on that of the Nizam, duly qualified for the purpose. To this our General returned a positive refusal; stating that, as the victorious and stronger party, it was his interest to continue hostilities, and if the enemy wished to prevent them, they had only to come to terms as speedily as possible, for which purpose he was willing to receive Scindia's vakeels in the British camp; that he should

not suspend his operations a moment till the preliminaries of peace were signed; on the contrary, that he should attack their forces wherever he found them. This course he pursued from a thorough knowledge of the character of his opponents, whose crafty policy, being always founded on delay, is best counteracted by promptitude and decision.

In the mean time Colonel Stevenson, having continued the pursuit of the enemy across the river Taptee, took possession of the town of Burhampoor, after a brush with some of the enemy's rear-guard, which had taken up a position on the outskirts of the place; whence continuing to advance, he opened the siege of Asseerghur, a strong hill-fort belonging to Scindia. General Wellesley, hearing that the Berar Rajah's infantry had joined the army of Scindia, and that the combined sovereigns showed a disposition to molest Colonel Stevenson in his operations against Asseerghur, on the 19th of October, descended the Adjuntee pass, that he might be at hand to move up to the support of the Colonel if necessary, and advanced as far as Burhampoor. What a contrast was the fine cultivated country which opened to our view, as we descended the Ghaut, to that we had just quitted. To eyes long accustomed to desolation and misery the sight of these wide plains, clothed in all the luxuriance of a just ripened harvest, was indeed most exhilarating and refreshing. Our poor half-starved cattle, long used to the hardest and most scanty fare, seemed to snuff up with delight the breeze wafted over this golden sea. The villages were fully peopled; the gardens around them well cultivated, and abounding with fruit and vegetables; and so abundant was the grain of different kinds, that we were frequently forced, however reluctantly, to pitch our camp in the midst of the standing corn. Game of all sorts was in such profusion, that it seemed as if it had purposely emigrated from the desolate plains we had left to the plentiful regions of Berar. Among these, the wild hog, attracted by the numerous plantations of sugar-cane, and fattened on this luxuriant food, afforded us excellent sport and a

most dainty feast: for in my opinion no meat can be compared to that of a fat full grown wild hog. Not being prepared with the requisite gearing for this sport, (for the territories subject to the Presidency of Madras do not produce these animals in such abundance as they are found in Bengal,) we were compelled to have recourse to weapons hastily prepared for the occasion. The bayonet at the end of a pole often supplied the place of a spear, and haunches of this noble animal, which might have made even an alderman lick his chaps, smoked from right to left of the camp. The sport of hog-hunting is not, however, without its danger, particularly to the horse, who frequently has his legs cut, and sometimes his bowels torn open, by the tusks of this animal, which in its wild state is a formidable opponent.

A good deal of Indian corn or maize was grown in these plains; but the grain chiefly cultivated was jowarree, the straw of which generally grows to the height of eight or nine feet.

Colonel Stevenson having pushed the siege of Asseerghur with vigour, that important fortress was surrendered to the British arms on the 21st of October. The General, hearing that Scindia and the Berar Rajah had separated their forces, the one having proceeded northward, and the other showing a disposition to play the old game with his cavalry, much to our annoyance, as it may be supposed, re-ascended the Adjuntee Ghaut, and on the 29th arrived at Aurungabad, with the view of covering the advance of a large convoy of supplies, under the charge of Captain Baynes, which was coming from the southward. In consequence of the rapid movements of the Mahratta cavalry, a large detachment of the Berar Rajah's horse came up with Captain Baynes before he could effect a junction with our division. Happily, however, the enemy were not successful; for Captain Baynes, having had time to take post under the walls of a village, was enabled with his small body, consisting of three companies of sepoys, about 100 Mysore horse, and two guns, to repulse a corps of

cavalry amounting to about 5000 men. Not being able to introduce the whole of his convoy into the village, he piled the bags of grain into a breastwork, forming, with the village, a parallelogram, or square, in the area of which he placed the cattle and drivers. His conduct, on this occasion in particular, drew forth the approbation of the General. Captain Baynes was employed throughout the campaign in the important and difficult duty of bringing up our supplies, for which purpose he had under his command a flying detachment, in the conduct of which his skill and gallantry were conspicuous. On this occasion he was accompanied by a large convoy of Brinjarries, which extraordinary race of people, so distinct from any other of the classes of the Indian population, deserve more particular mention than my limited knowledge of the civil geography of that country permits me to make. To my European readers, the best description I can give of their habits and appearance, is to compare them to a gypsy muleteer, if such a thing can be imagined. They possess a distinct costume—that of the women is extremely fantastic; and they adorn their bullocks with bells, in much the same way as the Spanish muleteers decorate their mules. They are in general armed with a sword and buckler, which they well know how to use in self-defence; live constantly in tents, carrying the whole of their families with them; and are employed as the general carriers throughout India. They are remarkable for their punctuality and honesty in their engagements, and it is as much good policy as good faith, to be just and liberal towards them. In fact, when I was in India there was no carrying on the war without them.

By this time Scindia, finding himself hard pressed by Colonel Stevenson, and having received accounts of the total defeat of his infantry in the Deccan, at the battle of Laswarree, by Lord Lake, began to think seriously of peace, as the only chance of saving any portion of his dominions. He accordingly despatched two vakeels, who were received in our camp with all suitable honours; and a negociation was set on foot, conducted on our

part by the General himself, in conjunction with Major (now Sir John) Malcolm, who acted as political agent on the part of the Governor-general, and who, during our latter operations, had remained behind at Ahmednaghur in order to settle that province which had fallen to us by conquest. The Berar Rajah, having failed in his object of intercepting our supplies, again turned his face northward, and joined his infantry in Berar; whereupon, having been reinforced by a battalion of the 3d native infantry from Ahmednaghur, and by such of our wounded as had sufficiently recovered, we again descended into Berar by the Bajorrah Pass, and were once more in communication with Colonel Stevenson, who, after the capture of Asseerghur, had returned to the southward. The negociation with Scindia having assumed a form that gave hopes of a speedy and favourable issue, our General agreed to a suspension of arms as far as regarded that chief, provided his troops did not approach within fifteen coss of our camp; reserving to himself the right to move in any direction he pleased, in order to the prosecution of his operations against the Berar Rajah, who had, as yet, shown no serious disposition to treat.

CHAPTER XII.

The two British Divisions united at Paterly.—The Berar Rajah's Army a short distance off.—Agreement made by Colonel Stevenson with them.—General Wellesley reconnoitres their Army.—Orders the British Force to advance.—Skirmish between parties of the Mysore and Enemy's Horse.—Battle of Argaum.—Part of the Army thrown into confusion at the outset.—Admirable presence of mind and knowledge of human nature displayed by General Wellesley in restoring order.—Anecdotes connected with the Battle.

On the 28th of November, Colonel Stevenson, being within a short distance of the Berar Rajah, and in the act of moving on to attack him, that chieftain sent word that he was disposed to enter on negotiations immediately, provided the Colonel would suspend his operations. This was agreed to, on condition that he would conform to the stipulations already made with Scindia, and immediately withdraw his forces—a proposal which was apparently acquiesced in. The following day the two British divisions having formed a junction at the village of Paterly, the enemy was observed in force a few miles off. Both divisions panted with the desire of engaging them; but as they showed a disposition to retreat, and as the General felt himself tied down by the previous agreement of Colonel Stevenson, he contented himself with pushing on a strong reconnoitering party in the direction of their army. The camp was accordingly formed with the intention of remaining at Paterly for that day. About two o'clock the General rode out to observe the motions of the enemy; and, on mounting a tower in one of the villages, he perceived them drawn up in a plain about three miles in his front, without showing any disposition to retire. On the contrary, it seemed as if they wished

to offer us battle, or, at least, to take to themselves the credit of having done so. This was a piece of braggadocio which the General could not stand: he, therefore, immediately sent back orders for the British divisions to fall in, and move down in the direction of the enemy. In the mean time we had an opportunity of observing from the tower a skirmish between a party of the Mysore horse and some of the enemy's patroles of cavalry; which was amusing enough, and had so little of a sanguinary character, that the most sensitive or squeamish individual might have contemplated the scene without any severe outrage to his feelings. There was abundance of wheeling and curvetting, and some firing of pistols, but nothing like coming to close quarters among the individual combatants, although both parties were mixed pell-mell. A few shots from our reconnoitering party soon stopped this child's play, and left the plain open for the advance of our troops.

It was near three o'clock before our divisions could be put in motion; for, as all expectation of a battle had been given up for that day, the soldiers had begun to cook their dinners. We advanced in three columns, one of cavalry and two of infantry.

The enemy were formed on an extensive plain in front of the village of Argaum; their infantry, to the amount of about 10,000, in the centre, with about forty pieces of cannon in the intervals of the battalions, and their cavalry, which was numerous, on the wings. There was, about half a mile in front of the centre of their position, a village, towards which the right column of infantry, composed of the General's own division, was directed, and in front of which it was intended that the line should be formed. With this view our column was to pass by a road to the left of the village, and, as soon as that was cleared, it was to wheel and take ground to the right. But, scarcely had the leading platoon gained the end of the village, when the enemy opened at once all their guns on it, from the distance of about 1000 yards, and being well directed, most of the shot took effect in the head of the column. The bullock-drivers attached to

some field pieces, which, as usual, moved near the head of the brigade, becoming alarmed at this unexpected salute, and dreading perhaps a second Assaye, lost their presence of mind, and of course the management of their cattle, which instantly turned round, and ran headlong into the midst of the platoons just behind them, and threw them into confusion. The troops coming up in the rear of these, not knowing the immediate cause of this confusion, and feeling severely the effect of the enemy's lobbing shot, became alarmed. A panic seized them; and two battalions of sepoys, with the infantry picquets, actually turned tail, and hastened to seek shelter behind the village. The General, who was then close to the spot under a tree giving orders to the brigadiers, perceiving what had happened, immediately stepped out in front, hoping by his presence to restore the confidence of the troops; but, seeing that this did not produce the desired effect, he mounted his horse, and rode up to the retreating battalions; when, instead of losing his temper, upbraiding them, and endeavouring to force them back to the spot from which they had fled, as most people would have done, he quietly ordered the officers to lead their men under cover of the village, and then to rally and get them into order as quickly as possible. This being done, he put the column again in motion, and leading these very same runaways round the other side of the village, formed them on the very spot he originally intended them to occupy, the remainder of the column following, and prolonging the line to the right.

This was at once a master-piece of generalship, and a signal display of that intuitive knowledge of human nature only to be found in great minds. There is not one man in a million, who, on seeing the troops turn their backs, would not have endeavoured to bring them again to the spot from which they had retreated; in this attempt it is more than probable that he would have failed; and in that case, the panic would, most likely, have extended down the column, producing the most disastrous consequences. As it was, the retrograde movement was mistaken by all, but the troops who actually

gave way for a countermarch. Indeed, it is very probable that, owing to the conduct of the General on this occasion, even the runaways might have flattered themselves into this belief, and thus have been saved from that sense of degradation which might have had a serious effect on their subsequent conduct during the day. A real advantage was also derived from this manœuvre, which might have been taken for a *ruse de guerre;* for the enemy having continued for some time to direct their guns at the spot where they first saw our column, the formation of our line was effected with less loss than would otherwise have been the case. This circumstance produced in my mind the first clear idea of that genius, which has since been so mainly instrumental, by its conduct and example, in achieving the deliverance of Europe. From the first moment I saw General Wellesley I formed a high opinion of him ; but from this time forth, I looked up to him with a degree of respect bordering on veneration. As fast as each battalion came into line, the General ordered the men to lie down, by which a two-fold advantage is gained ; first as being a smaller object for the fire of the enemy than when standing up ; and next, which is by no means the less important consideration, from not having the means of using their legs, they are kept steady in their position, from which the dread of the enemy's shot might tempt them to waver. This leads me to remark, that nothing is so trying for troops as to stand exposed to a heavy fire from guns out of the point-blank range ; for it cannot be expected that ordinary flesh and blood will stand and see a shot hit it, without attempting to get out of the way. This, of course, produces a degree of unsteadiness, which, were they nearer their enemy, in all probability they would not betray. I would also observe, for the benefit of my young military readers, that they must not suppose, when they see a shot going leisurely along the ground, that it is then quite innocuous, particularly if it has a spinning motion ; for if when in that state it meets with a stone, or any irregularity which raises it from the ground, it will fly off apparently with renewed force, but in fact,

only with that force which it was before expending in its rotary motion. I knew a person whose leg was shattered to pieces from his having thought to stop a ball in this situation, by putting his foot on it.

While the General was thus employed in restoring order and forming his division, Colonel Stevenson had begun to deploy to the left of the village; and by the time the General could with safety leave the right wing, this movement was effected. He was much pleased with the appearance of Colonel Stevenson's division in line; and no doubt a little pleased with himself also; for in riding back to the right wing, he said to me, "Did you ever see a battle restored like this?" While the formation of our line was going on, two strong batteries had been planted on each side of the village, and doubtless repaid the enemy's guns with interest.

Having made the signal of advance to the infantry, the General rode off to the cavalry, consisting of six regiments, which, being drawn up in two lines on the right, awaited his orders. Putting himself at their head, he advanced against the main body of the enemy's horse, which, supported by a large rocket-corps mounted on camels, appeared disposed to wait our approach. As soon as our cavalry began to move forward, the rockets opened on it, but without much effect; for this weapon of offence, although long used among the armies of India, had not been brought to the perfection since attained under the direction of Sir William Congreve. In fact, it was not then by any means considered as a formidable arm.

The General halted the cavalry when within about six hundred yards of the enemy, and directed the gallopers to open upon them previously to the charge, which was to be made the moment the guns seemed to produce an effect. He then rode back to the infantry, which had advanced in beautiful order, with the whole of their guns in the intervals. These continued to play as they advanced, till within about musket-shot of the enemy, when the charge being sounded, the whole line pushed forward at a rapid pace, and soon drove their infantry from the field, with-

out any material resistance on their part, except from a body of about 1000 men, called the *Pharsee Risaulah* (or Persian battalion,) which, throwing aside their matchlocks, advanced with sword and buckler, somewhat in the style of the Highlanders of old; and with loud cries and threatening gestures, precipitated themselves furiously on the 74th and part of the 78th regiments. But the sword and target were no match for the musket and bayonet, and at least three hundred of this gallant band bit the dust in the space of as many hundred yards. Poor fellows! they deserved a better fate, or at least they merited to have lost their lives in a nobler cause than that of a Mahratta chief. Meanwhile the British cavalry charged the enemy's horse without meeting with much resistance; for they had already been shaken by the fire of the gallopers. Indeed, it would have been better if the guns had not been opened, for then the cavalry might have got closer to them. As it was, a considerable number were cut up, and the whole retreated precipitately by their left, abandoning their infantry and baggage. Almost the whole of the latter, among which were some elephants laden with treasure, fell into our hands. One elephant with a casket of jewels of great value was known to have been taken. Who was the fortunate captor of the casket was never ascertained; but suspicion fell upon an officer of cavalry, who from that day lived in a degree of splendour to which his rank and appointments could have given him no pretensions. The enemy's infantry having abandoned their guns, and finding their retreat cut off by the high road to Nagpoor, dispersed, and, under cover of the night, sought refuge among the mountains in their rear.

It is now proper that I should make some mention of what took place on the left of our line, opposite to which a considerable body of cavalry was posted in the early part of the action. The majority of these, however, proved to belong to Scindia, and were there in breach of the treaty made with us, probably with a view of profiting by any reverse which might happen to our army. But, perceiving how matters must end, they wisely

sheered off in time to avoid coming in contact with our troops. The body of the Berar Rajah's horse, which then remained at that point, made a demonstration of turning the flank of our infantry; but a battalion thrown back *en potence*, supported by the Mysore horse, soon compelled them to retire. Although Colonel Stevenson was so weak at this time that he could not mount a horse, it did not prevent his fulfilling his duties in the most efficient manner. Seated on an elephant, he brought his division into action in excellent style; and by the coolness which he displayed under the enemy's shot, for which he was a conspicuous object, he set a gallant example to his troops. We had scarcely defeated the enemy when night closed in upon us, and prevented the pursuit from being followed up. Indeed, had the action begun a few hours earlier, the whole of the enemy's regular battalions must have been annihilated, and their cavalry roughly handled. As it was we obtained possession of their guns, about thirty-eight in number, tumbrils, &c. several standards, and a great portion of their baggage, besides inflicting on them a severe loss in killed and wounded.

I cannot conceive what could have induced the Berar Rajah to seek a battle on this occasion. It was the height of folly to suppose that, with an army greatly inferior in infantry and artillery to that of Scindia, which was defeated at the battle of Assaye by only half our force, he could pretend to cope with the whole of our army. He paid dearly for his temerity, and with difficulty escaped himself. Wishing once more to try my luck in a charge of cavalry, I accompanied them on this occasion. Pushing on in the pursuit, I came up with one of the baggage elephants, whose driver easily surrendered himself to me. But night coming on, and wishing to join our infantry, I gave him in charge to one of our native troopers, and saw no more of my booty. I witnessed on this occasion a curious mode of attack adopted by the old 19th dragoons, in their pursuit of the native horsemen, whose bodies were so defended, either by armour or stuffed coats, that there was no getting a

cut at them, while their heads were equally protected by a large turban, with a thick pad depending over the ears and neck. This being the case, it became, of course, necessary to "establish a raw," (in the slang phrase,) or, more properly speaking, to make a bare place, before any wound could be inflicted with the sword. To effect this, therefore, they first gave point at the turban, and, that being knocked off, they had a fair cut at the head.

Returning to join our infantry, and passing over the field of battle during the dark, I could scarcely persuade my horse to move,—such a disgust, or dread, have these animals of the smell of dead bodies. As he was picking his way, snorting and starting at every step, and apparently much in the same mood as a school-boy in a churchyard, a tall figure in white suddenly rose up before me, which made him spring with such violence as nearly to dislodge me from the saddle. Having outgrown my nursery fears, and thinking that this might be some poor wounded wretch who needed assistance, I was anxious to approach him; but my horse, who had sometimes a will of his own, thought proper to dispute the point with me: I was therefore compelled to dismount, and lead him by the bridle. Having got within a short distance of the poor man, I accosted him in Hindostanee, but he answered not. The moon, just then emerging from a cloud, showed me that the lower part of his face had been carried off by a cannon-shot. I proffered my assistance. He shook his head, and waved his hand, as if he wished to be rid of me; so, feeling that I could not be of any essential service to the poor wretch, I remounted my horse, and pursued my course, provided with ample food for meditation.

As the baggage did not find its way up on the night of the battle, most of us, I believe, had the honour of both dining and supping with that truly hospitable nobleman, Duke Humphrey, whose good cheer, oftener spread before the poor than the rich, possesses the advantage of sitting particularly light on the stomach.

Our loss did not prove to be great; only about 400 in killed and wounded. The following day Colonel Ste-

venson marched in pursuit of the enemy, and our division remained to perform the necessary duties after a battle.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Army resumes its march to the Eastward.—Reaches Ellichpoor.—Entertainment given by the Nabob of that place.—Siege of Gawilghur resolved upon.—Description of that Fortress.—Adventure of the Author in proceeding thither.—Description and anecdotes of his Horse.—Terror of a Guide on seeing the firing from the Fort.—Enter the Mountains.—Reach the Northern side of the place.—Progress of the Siege.—Fool-hardiness of an Officer.—Assault.—Desperate resistance by a body of Rajpoots. Dreadful Carnage among the Enemy.—Cruel sport of our European Soldiers.—Escape of the Author from a party of them.—The Rajpoots in garrison put their Women to death.—Captain Johnstone.—Superior zeal of European Officers in India.—Superiority of the British Regiments in India to those of the same service in Europe.—Both circumstances accounted for.—Booty.

On the first of October we resumed our march to the eastward, and, without seeing any thing of the enemy, reached Ellichpoor, a town of some importance, and the capital of a small district belonging to a Mussulman chief, or nabob, of the name of Salabut Jung, tributary to the Nizam. I accompanied the General on a visit which he paid to this chief, who received us in a handsome manner. He was a man of pleasing address and affable manners, and much more courteous and free than the Hindoo chiefs of the same rank whom we had been lately in the habit of meeting. While we remained near his capital he entertained us with a dinner and *nautch*, at which most of the officers of both divisions of the army attended. The chief himself sat down to dinner with us, a thing not usual among the natives, and displayed a degree of conviviality and good fellowship quite unexpected. It was now resolved to undertake the siege of

Gawilghur, a hill-fort belonging to the Berar Rajah, situated on the southern edge of a range of mountains lying between the sources of the Poonah and Taptee rivers, and about twelve miles north-west of Ellichpoor.

Before I begin to detail the operations of the siege, it is proper that I should give a description of this fortress, which was the principal hold of the Berar Rajah, and understood to be the depository of his treasures. It consists of a lofty mountain, the plan of which is somewhat in the shape of a figure 8; the smaller end being connected with the table-land to the northward by a narrow isthmus, and the larger circle jutting out into the plain, having the sides separated from the contiguous mountains by deep chasms or valleys. It is thus naturally divided into two forts, that to the southward being the inner one, or citadel, having its sides very precipitous, and only to be approached from the plains; while that to the northward, which is joined to the table-land, forms the outer fort; thus producing a double line of defence on the only weak points. Excepting across the isthmus above-mentioned, and at the separation of the two forts, the walls are not particularly lofty; neither is it necessary that they should be, the scarped nature of the mountain requiring but little additional defence. But, at those weak points already alluded to, the walls were both strong and high, and well flanked with towers, but without having any ditches of consequence.

I was ordered to proceed with Captain Johnstone to reconnoitre as much of the fortress as could be approached on the southern side; but, having some business in the camp before I started, and thinking that I should be able easily to overtake our reconnoitering party on the march, I remained behind for about half an hour. I then mounted my horse and galloped after it; but, having missed the road by which the party had proceeded, and not being able to discern the troops, owing, I suppose, to the high grain, which concealed them from my view, I made straight for the fort, which, as it stood frowning over the plain, could not easily be missed. Having ridden some miles without seeing any

thing of our party, just as I was emerging from a path leading through a field of the lofty jowarree, I came suddenly upon a body of Mahratta horse. They espied me almost as soon as I did them, and the most forward of them immediately gave chase; but the speed of my horse, and the height of the grain with which the country was covered, soon concealed me from their sight. Perceiving a village at a short distance, and wishing to ascertain something of their motions, (for I was not sure that they might not have been a body of the Paishwah's horse which co-operated with our army,) I rode thither, and alighting from my horse, mounted one of the towers. But scarcely had I done this, when I perceived a number of the horsemen close on each side of the village, apparently in search of me. There was no time to be lost; so I instantly mounted, clapped spurs to my horse, and escaped through the gate of the village, just as my pursuers were within a few yards of it. A general chase ensued; but they were no match for my noble Arab, Bottom, (for that was his name,) who soon carried me out of their reach, and back to camp; where, having reported the circumstance to the General, the cavalry picquets were ordered out in search of my friends, but without success.

It is but fair that I should make some mention of my good steed, to whom I perhaps owed my life on this occasion. He was purchased for me by a friend at Bombay, at the beginning of the campaign, through which, though most of the mounted officers had their horses killed, he escaped unhurt. Like his namesake of Shakspearian fame, he had a good deal of originality in his character, though in his person he bore no resemblance to that uncooth monster. His temper was not always even, for he was somewhat given to quarrel with his own species, and sometimes with his master; yet, upon the whole, we agreed well, and were doubtless much attached to each other; for, when in a good humour, he would lick my hands and face like a dog. He was always foremost in the chase, in which he took much delight; and, when no dog was near, would often take an

active part, by endeavouring to seize the fox by the brush. He had also an odd fancy for biting bullock's rumps, particularly if they were fat. This extraordinary *penchant* of his was once nearly productive of fatal consequences. I was riding among the baggage one day, when he saw at a short distance a bullock with a most inviting posterior, having a child seated between the panniers on his back. Bottom walked quietly up to it, and, without my being aware of what he was about, inflicted a very sharp grip on that part where an Abyssinian epicure would naturally have cut the first steak for his travelling snack. Surprised, no doubt, at such an unusual salutation, the animal kicked up, and threw the poor child headlong on the ground, to the great terror of its mother; happily, however, without having done it much harm. Poor dear Bottom! my companion in danger or in sport! He carried me well for many years, during which he won me a plate of 100 guineas; till at last, having caught cold during a training for the Madras races, he got an incurable lameness in the round bone; when, as I had no park to turn him into, a charitable bullet put a period to his existence. Alas! poor Bottom!

The day after my unsuccessful attempt to reach the fort at Gawilghur, I took advantage of the escort afforded by another detachment proceeding to that place. On the march, the guide entertained us with an account of a tremendously large gun mounted in that fortress, which was the dread of the surrounding country for at least twenty miles, and was employed as a bugbear to the neighbourhood to secure the payment of rents, &c. He had scarcely finished his description of this terrible engine of destruction, when the smoke of a gun was seen to issue from the fort, from which we were then about ten miles distant. Scarcely had the report reached our ears, when the loquacious guide threw himself flat on his face, to all appearance in the greatest terror, calling to us, at the same time, to save ourselves from the shot. A general laugh having in some measure brought him to his senses, he stared around him in astonishment

at our temerity, and, on regaining his legs, could hardly be persuaded that we were all alive and unhurt.

On arriving within a short distance of Gawilghur, I met Captain Johnstone, who, having completed his reconnoissance of the southern side of the fort, was of opinion that it was by nature so strong on that point that it would be better to examine the side connected with the table-land in the mountains, (where it was reported to be more assailable,) previously to deciding on the point of attack. He accordingly resolved to enter the mountains for that purpose, having guides with him who engaged to lead our reconnoitering party to the point in question. The road being extremely rugged and difficult, in many places not more than a footpath, and at the same time very circuitous, it took us two days of hard marching before we came in sight of the fort. This we found much as it had been described by the guides; the outer fort being connected with a small table-land by a neck of about three hundred yards in breadth, across which was a strong wall; but having only a shallow ditch and no glacis, it was quite exposed; while the ground in front, which was on the same level with it, afforded every facility for the construction of batteries and approaches. There was, however, this point to be considered, that, in attacking the fort on this side, we should have two forts to take instead of one. This objection was notwithstanding overruled, because, from what we could see of the inner wall, which was nearly at right angles with the face we were examining, it did not at all contribute to the defence of the outer one, and was, besides, so situated that part of the ground within the outer fort completely commanded it. The result of our reconnoissance having been communicated to the General, he resolved that the principal attack should be made on the northern side, and that it should be carried on by Colonel Stevenson's division. A detachment of this corps, therefore, took post among the hills, and invested the fort on that side, while the whole of the pioneers of the army commenced the arduous task of making a practicable road for the artillery to the point

of attack, a distance of about twenty miles. It having been determined, also, that another attack should be made on the south side from the plain, (more, I believe, as a diversion to the principal attack,) I was ordered back to superintend the operations at that point; Captain Johnstone remaining with Colonel Stevenson's force to conduct the principal attack. The road being completed, and Colonel Stevenson's whole corps, cavalry excepted, having taken up its position on the northern side of the fort, the trenches were opened on the night of the 12th of November, by the erection of two batteries, one to knock off the defences, and the other to batter in breach; while zig-zags of communication were also made from the rear. The following day these batteries were opened, and were answered by the enemy, but with no great spirit. In the night of the 13th, another battery was erected for morters and howitzers, and a parallel was thrown up connecting the different works. From this period our batteries continued to play as rapidly as safety would permit; for under a hot sun the guns, particularly the brass ones, must be left to cool for some time during the day, otherwise the solar rays and the firing together would cause the latter to run at the muzzle, and the others to become so heated as to occasion the cartridge to explode by simple contact with the metal. The wall of the fort having proved to be much tougher than supposed, it was not till the night of the 16th that the breach was reported practicable: up to that time, working parties were employed in the construction of such further works as were necessary to secure our trenches, and to cover the storming party in case of an assault.

During these operations on the north side, we, on our part, were employed in the difficult labour of making a road for the guns up the side of a hill, and afterwards in erecting a battery for four guns at a spot about four hundred yards from the walls, nearly opposite to the southern gate; also in throwing up several breastworks, to cover our troops posted on the hill. The construction of our battery was a most arduous task; for the

materials had to be brought upwards of half a mile up a steep mountain. Then, there was the job of hauling up the guns, which in many places could only be done by fastening tackle to the trees; all which operations, however, were completed in one night; and the guns opened at day-break on the morning of the 15th.

During our operations on this side, the enemy continued a smart fire of artillery upon us; but with little effect, as the irregularity of the ground, and the shape of the hill on which our approaches were made, afforded considerable shelter. But one shot in particular I recollect; as without causing any bloodshed, it was the occasion of considerable annoyance to myself and companions, in effectually demolishing a dinner, procured with difficulty from the camp, but at which we had fortunately not yet seated ourselves. The enemy also entertained us with a few sorties, which were, however, easily repulsed; and regularly every night they were kind enough to indulge us with a beautiful illumination of blue lights, placed at regular distances along the parapet of the fort, and at the same time, to regale our ears with a serenade of tom-toms, horns, and other martial instruments.

About this time an instance of fool-hardiness occurred on the northern attack, which deserves to be recorded, not for any merit attached to the action, but for the almost miraculous escape of the individual who performed it. An European officer belonging to one of the native regiments laid a bet that he would, in open day-light, walk from our breaching battery up to the ditch of the fort, a distance of about four hundred yards, and back again, without breaking into a run. He accordingly started about noon, while our batteries were silent, and walked slowly up to the edge of the ditch, which was within pistol-shot of the walls; when, having taken off his hat, and made a low bow to the enemy, he deliberately retraced his steps, and won his bet uninjured. As long as he continued to advance, although the enemy crowded the ramparts to view him, they did not offer to fire, thinking, I suppose, he came to parley; but the

moment he turned his back they opened upon him a shower of musketry and shot, which ceased not till he was safe in our trenches.

It having been resolved that the assault should take place on the morning of the 17th at ten o'clock, a storming party was ordered for that purpose from Colonel Stevenson's corps, and placed under the command of Colonel Kenny; while two other attacks, intended rather as diversions, were to be made from the southern side by our division; one, under Colonel Wallace, which was to menace the south gate, and the other under Colonel Chalmers, which was to attack the north-west, or principal entrance of the fort.

When every thing was prepared for the assault and the storming party just about to advance, the *killedar* sent out to say that he was disposed to capitulate.

Colonel Stevenson replied, that he must surrender at discretion; that only half an hour would be given him to consider on the subject; and that, if at the end of that time his troops were not withdrawn from the breach, he would order the storming party to advance. The time had nearly expired, when, instead of the troops retiring from the breach, a body was seen to emerge from the gate of the inner fort, and to make towards the breach. Upon this Colonel Stevenson lost not a moment in giving the signal for the assault, and in a minute or two the breach was in possession of our troops, who experienced but a feeble resistance from the enemy. Scarcely, however, had the foremost established themselves on the rampart, when the column which had been seen to issue from the inner fort made its appearance. This was immediately charged by the grenadiers of the Scotch brigade, and repulsed with great slaughter. Flying to enter the gate of the inner fort they found it shut against them, upon which they made for the main, or north-west gate of the lower fort. But scarcely had they opened it, when they were met by the head of Colonel Chalmers' column; so that thus coming between two fires, nearly the whole of this body of men were slain, the gateway being literally choked

up with their bodies. The whole of the troops composing Colonel Kenny's column having now entered the lower fort, two sepoy battalions were drawn up on a height fronting the wall of the inner fort, on which they commenced such an incessant and well directed fire, that none of the enemy durst show their noses above the parapet. Under cover of this fire the light company of the Scotch brigade placed their ladders against the wall, and we were soon master of the last defences of the fort.

About this time fell Colonel Kenny, as it was thought, by a shot from our own troops in the rear. He was an officer of gallantry and experience, and much regretted in the army, not only as a brave soldier, but as an amiable member of society.

Though the works of the fort were now all carried, the contest did not end here; for scarcely had the gate been opened to admit the remainder of the storming party, when a body, looking more like furies than men, having their long hair cast loose over their shoulders, and brandishing their swords over their heads, came rushing from behind some buildings, and fell furiously on our Europeans. These, however, received them with that coolness and determination for which undisciplined valour, however desperate, can never be a match. The contest was nevertheless sanguinary to both parties; for these desperadoes sold their lives dearly. One fellow, in particular, I was told, having got his back to a wall, killed and wounded several Europeans before he could be despatched. Among this party was the killedar; also the commander-in-chief of the Berar Rajah's infantry, (whose name I forget,) the same who commanded under the Rajah at the battle of Argaum, and to whose fool-hardy courage, it was said, the Rajah owed the defeat of his army, and whose equally ill-timed valour was also the cause of a useless sacrifice of lives on this occasion. It was reported, that, hearing of the killedar's proposal to capitulate on the morning of the assault, he sent for that officer, upbraided him with cowardice, and, having assumed the command of

the fort himself, issued orders for determined resistance. Hence we may account for that apparently treacherous act of the enemy, in demanding a cessation of arms, and then sending a reinforcement for the defence of the breach, while a flag of truce was flying.

The troops composing the storming party, particularly the Europeans, behaved with great bravery on this occasion. But, while I say this, truth obliges me to declare, that their moderation after victory was not equal to their valour in achieving it. I saw a party of the Scotch brigade bring out some of the enemy, whom they had found concealed in a house, saying that they would give the rascals a chance. Then, taking them out one by one like basket-hares, they called to them, in Hindostanee, to run, and, when they got to the distance of about thirty yards, they levelled and brought them down. It was with difficulty that they could be persuaded to give up this cruel diversion. Whether it is owing to the arrack they drink, or to some other cause, I know not; but certainly the European soldiers in India become very blood-thirsty and ferocious. On this occasion I almost fell a victim myself to this disposition; for, being attracted by a great noise in one of the houses, I went in, and found several of our soldiers in the act of plundering and ill-using the inhabitants. On remonstrating with them on their brutal conduct, and on their breach of orders, (for all plundering was positively forbidden by the General in the orders issued previously to the assault,) I was told to "get about my business for a meddling young rascal, or they would put their bayonets into me; and that, having entered the place by storm, the devil himself should not hinder them from having their right of plunder:" which salutation was accompanied by such an evident determination to put their threats in execution, that I was glad to make my escape in a whole skin.

A horrid scene which I witnessed at this time made such a lively impression on my youthful mind, that the very recollection of it, even at this distance of time, makes my blood run cold. When the fort was com-

pletely in our possession, and all firing had ceased, I was, in company with another officer, strolling among some buildings, which, from their superior order, appeared to have belonged to the killedar, or some functionary of note in the garrison; when some groans proceeding from one of the houses caught our ears. We entered, and to our astonishment beheld a large room full of women, many of them young and beautiful, dreadfully mangled, most of them dead, but some still in the agonies of dissolution. Every tender, every manly feeling of the heart was shocked at such a sight. It could not be our soldiers that had done such a deed. No! the suspicion could not be harboured an instant. No human motive alone could have urged such an act. And so it proved; for, on questioning the survivors, we learned that the Rajpoots composing the garrison, who had their families with them, finding all hopes of saving the place to be vain, had collected their wives and daughters, and having butchered them in the manner above described, sallied forth, with no earthly hope left but that of selling their lives dearly. Although so completely in opposition to Christian principles, we cannot blame the deed: horrid and barbarous as it was, still it had in it something of a noble character. It was in consonance with their religious principles; and it was to save their wives and daughters from pollution! The men who perpetrated this deed of horror were the same who afterwards precipitated themselves with such desperation on our Europeans, and not one of whom would accept quarter.

Our loss on this occasion, and during the operations of the siege, was not so great as might have been expected. That of the enemy must have been immense. Out of a garrison of about 8000 men, none escaped but such as dropped from the walls at the peril of their lives, all the gates having been stopped up by our troops.

The exertions of the army during the siege, and in the previous operation of cutting a road through the mountains, were such as to call forth the warmest applause of the General. The pioneers, as usual, per-

formed their task in the most efficient manner. But the conduct of Captain Johnstone, of the engineers, was the theme of admiration, from the General downwards. Indeed I think he was, without exception, the best officer I ever served with. To great natural and acquired talents, he joined a zeal and an ardour in his professional duties which I never saw equalled. Having no one to assist him in the duties of an engineer, he was compelled to live constantly in the trenches during the siege; but a strong constitution enabled him to get over it without injury. I was not quite so fortunate; for, having been nearly a fortnight without ever going to bed, and most of that time without entering a tent, while the thermometer was upwards of 100° in the shade during the day, and down as low as the freezing point at night, I was seized, as soon as the siege was over, with a dysentery, which youth and a good constitution alone enabled me to overcome. I have ever considered it extremely fortunate for me that, at the outset of my military career, I should have fallen under such good example and tuition as were afforded by Captain (now Colonel) Johnstone. But, while I thus particularize my first master in the art of war, I must also say of the officers of the Indian army generally, whether of the King's or Company's service, that in no part of the world (and I have seen a good deal of service in Europe as well as Asia) have I witnessed so much zeal in their professional duties as is displayed by them. This must doubtless arise from their peculiar situation, which, as a few among millions, renders their personal exertions the more necessary. I must also say of the European soldiers in India, that they have more dash in them than their countrymen display in Europe; but this may be accounted for by the different degrees of respect with which they view their enemy. Indeed, after a regiment has been a few years in India, it is, in every respect, superior to one just come out; for by that time all those of weakly constitutions have died off. The old 19th dragoons, excepting that their habits were not the most temperate, were a fine specimen of what a regiment ought to be. By almost

constant service, and the manly game of long bullets, which the old Indian regiments used to practice under the hottest sun, these men had become perfectly bronzed, and were as hard as iron, being proof against sun without and arrack within. They used to call themselves the "terrors of the East." Indeed such was the respect in which they were held by the natives that, when they embarked for England, all the Black Town of Madras was emptied to see them off.

During the siege of Gawilghur we were all buoyed up with the hope of making our fortunes, as immense treasures were reported to be deposited in the fort. But in this expectation we were grievously disappointed, not much booty having been found. It was said that a great deal of specie and jewels had been carried off during the siege; which was very probable, as, from the situation of the fortress, it was impossible to invest it properly.

CHAPTER XIV.

Return to Ellichpoor.—Resume our march towards Nagpoor.—Peace concluded with the Mahratta powers.—Panegyric on Marquis Wellesley's policy.—The Army retraces its steps.—Plundering Expedition of the Pindarrees in our rear, attacked and routed.—The Author arrives at Poonah.—Is attacked by Guinea worms, and thereby prevented from accompanying General Wellesley to Bombay.—Festivities at Poonah.—Anecdote of a Public Dinner.—Horse-Races.—The Author returns with part of the Army to the Madras territories.—Sepoys bit by a mad Jackal.—Monsoon sets in.—The Detachment crosses the Kistnah in Basket-boats.—Mode of dragging them across by horses.—Falls of Gogawk.

On the 20th our division returned to Ellichpoor, and there, having fallen in on the high-road to Nagpoor, the capital of the Berar Rajah, we began our march for

that place; Colonel Stevenson remaining to keep Scindia in check, in case that chief should be disposed to resume hostilities.

The Berar Rajah, finding himself driven to extremities by the destruction of his army, and the loss of his principal fortress, and dreading our advance towards his capital, now sent vakeels to our camp; and, so earnest was he to bring the war to a conclusion, that, on the 17th of December, the treaty of peace was signed in our camp at Deoghaum. Shortly afterwards, Scindia finding himself left in the lurch, began seriously to resume negociations, and on the 30th of December, another treaty was concluded with him.

Thus, in a short though sanguinary war, undertaken with decision, and carried on with vigour, the formidable power of the Mahrattas received its death-blow; by which, with the subsequent campaign against Holkar, all remains of foreign influence in Hindostan, was rooted out. Hereby that illustrious statesman, Marquis Wellesley, put the finishing stroke to his splendid career, begun with the destruction of the warlike kingdom of Mysore, which, from the infancy of our power in India, had menaced the security of our Asiatic possessions. In the government of the Marquis, we know not which most to admire; the promptitude, decision, and vigour of his operations, or the policy of his measures, whereby he contrived not only to defeat our enemies piece-meal, but to make them assist in the destruction of each other. Since his departure from India, his successors have had a comparatively easy game to play.

The war being now brought to a close, the army began to retrace its steps. The Nizam's subsidiary went into cantonments at Jaulnah, and the General's division returned towards Poonah. On arriving within two or three marches of Ahmednaghur, hearing that a large body of Pindarree horse had entered that province, and were committing their usual depredations, the General resolved to inflict on them, if possible, a signal chastisement. Taking with him, therefore, the whole of the cavalry and light infantry of the army, after a rapid march

of a day and a night, he overtook them. But as, of course, they pretended not to show fight, the punishment inflicted on them was not so severe as could have been wished, though sufficient to make them keep at a respectful distance from our territories for some time afterwards.

The province of Ahmednaghur, which, at its conquest had been annexed to the Company's dominions, had already, within the short space of time since it had come into our possession, begun to display the fruits of a mild and a just government. Such of the inhabitants as had survived the famine, had returned to their habitations; and having been provided by our Government with the means of subsistence, and with seed for cultivation, the country was gradually assuming the appearance of activity and order.

After the rout of the Pindarrees, the division turned its head westward. When within about 120 miles of Poonah, the General, finding that his presence was required both there and at Bombay, left the division under the command of Colonel Wallace, and pushed on with a small escort for Poonah. As the force was to proceed by a different route, and it was of importance that this road should be surveyed, I was ordered to accompany the General. But I think I never had so difficult a task in my life. I had to survey accurately the road for the distance, on an average of twenty-five miles a day for five days successively; while, to add to my hardship, towards the latter part of the march I was attacked with guinea-worms in my legs, so that I could scarcely dismount from my horse.

Having remained a few days at Poonah to concert measures with Colonel Close, the Resident, the General set off for Bombay. He had previously asked me to accompany him, but the troublesome guinea-worms had laid me up so completely, that I was necessitated to decline the honour. This was, perhaps, the most unfortunate point in my life; for, had I accompanied the General at that time, most probably he would have made me his aid-de-camp, as he shortly afterwards did a young man who went down in charge of his escort, his former

aid-de-camp, Captain West, having been obliged to leave the camp from ill health; and thus, in all probability, the door to rank and honours would have been opened to me. How painfully I felt afterwards, the truth of the poet's words, "There is a tide in the affairs of men;" and how severely mortified I was at having been compelled to let it flow by me!

These guinea-worms with which I was afflicted are generally about three or four feet in length, and about the thickness of a knitting-needle, being apparently composed only of a transparent skin filled with watery liquid. The common way of extracting them, is by twisting them on a bit of stick, a little every day, and with great care; for if they break during the operation, which often happens, the leg swells and festers, producing much pain, and requiring considerable time, and a good deal of hacking and cutting, before the dead pieces can be effectually extracted. It was nearly a year before I fairly got rid of them, during which time they occasionally laid me up for weeks together on the sofa. They almost always attack the foot. The natives say they proceed from drinking some particular kind of water, but I never heard their presence satisfactorily accounted for.

As soon as the force had returned to the vicinity of Poonah, where it remained encamped for some time, nothing was thought of but amusing ourselves after the fatigues of a hard campaign. The troops in cantonments there, as well as the Resident, did not omit to entertain us with sundry feasts, at which the health of the heroes of Assaye was not forgotten to be drunk in bumpers of cool Carbonel. I recollect on one of these occasions, a rather illiterate character, who used to say that "Father and he fit, caise he sold the beastesses for too little money; so he coummed out a cadet," sat as vice-president; the toast of "General Wellesley, and the heroes of Assaye," was, as usual, given from the chair; when Mr. Vice, rising majestically, and holding aloft his brimming glass, with a sonorous voice,

and north-country accent, echoed the toast, in the words, "General Wellesley, and here he is I say!"

Among other sources of amusement with Englishmen, the turf was not forgotten. A course was soon marked out, and races set on foot, under the auspices of Colonel Close, who was very fond of the sport, and had some good horses. The races went off with great eclat, followed, of course, by the never-failing accompaniment of a ball and supper, at which there were at least ten gentlemen to one lady.

The races in India, which are held annually at most of the principal military stations, are generally very pleasant meetings; and, as all the horses and their owners are known, an interest is excited far different from the gambling and black-leg speculations of the English turf, where our expectations are generally balked by unfair practices behind the curtain.

About the end of March the General returned from Bombay where he had been received with all the honours due to his splendid services; and, having remained in camp for a short time, in order to organize a subsidiary force for the Paishwah, which was placed under the command of Colonel Wallace, he set off over-land to Madras.

His division being thus broken up, those regiments which did not form part of the subsidiary force, consisting of the 19th dragoons, two regiments of native cavalry, two battalions of sepoys, and some artillery, commenced their march for the southward, under the command of Lieutenant-colonel Hill. Having no part or allotment in the subsidiary force, I accompanied this detachment.

We followed nearly the same road by which we had marched in advancing to Poonah, and reached the banks of the Kistnah without any remarkable occurrence, except that of a mad jackal having found its way into the camp, and bitten ten or twelve sepoys (all of whom died) before it could be killed.

As it had rained hard during our march, and the south-west monsoon had set in earlier than usual, we found the

Kistnah full from bank to bank, and were therefore under the necessity of sending in search of boats to carry the detachments across. But, as only two wooden ones, and a very few basket-boats could be procured, we were obliged to set to and make a good number of the latter class ourselves. Though their construction is rude and simple, consisting merely of a round wicker-work basket, about ten feet in diameter, shaped just like a saucer and covered with hides, they are capable of transporting artillery; but no attempt is ever made to put horses or cattle into them. In fact it is not necessary; for with a little management, the horses are made not only to swim with the boat but to drag it after them. For this purpose two horses are generally taken with each boat, having a watering bridle in their mouth, and a rope attached to the mane close to the withers. Their heads being turned the right way, which is the only difficult part of the job, they make for the opposite bank without hesitation, dragging by the rope, which is tied to their mane and held by some person in the boat. It is altogether a gallant sight. Their eager look, their inflated nostrils, and the occasional dashing of their fore legs above the water, produce an effect, which might not unaptly be compared to the foaming team which fabulists have yoked to the car of Neptune.

Indeed, if it had not been for the cavalry horses, I know not how we should have crossed the river; for, besides being nearly half a mile in width, full from bank to bank, and running at a most rapid rate, the wind blew so strong against us that not a single boat which attempted to cross without a horse succeeded; and, as it was, the stream generally carried them half a mile down the river before they could gain the opposite bank. There were very few instances of the horses attempting to turn back when once their heads were fairly turned in the proper direction, notwithstanding the great distance they had to swim, and the load they had to draw; so that very few of these noble animals were lost. The elephants in general took the water well, though one or two could not be persuaded to go in of

their own accord; two or three of the strongest of their own species were therefore sent to compel them. These, after having given the refractory gentlemen a sound drubbing with sticks, which they held in their trunks, fairly shoved them into the water, and did not quit them till they were landed on the opposite bank. It was a curious sight to witness, and perhaps the strongest instance of the power of man over the brute creation that can well be imagined. Their manner of swimming is curious. The whole of the body is immersed in the water, sometimes to the depth of two or three feet, and occasionally they send their trunk up to the surface for a fresh supply of air. Thus their keeper has no very pleasant birth of it, being sometimes soused over head and ears. Camels cannot be persuaded to go into the water at all; and it is consequently necessary to lash them to the side of the boat. Bullocks will swim well, but cannot be used like horses for dragging the boats.

As far as I can recollect, it took us a week to cross the river. Shortly afterwards we received orders from General Wellesley to bring to his senses one of the independent chiefs lying in our route, who had shut his gates on the General, and behaved very insolently to him as he passed. We accordingly prepared scaling-ladders for the attack of his petty mud fort; but, unfortunately for our glory, while we climbed up on one side, the garrison walked out at the other.

Continuing of course to the southward, we crossed the rivers Mulpurba and Gulpurba in the same manner as we had done the Kistnah, and reached the banks of the Toombudra about the end of May. When we were on the Mulpurba, we heard of some falls in the river about eight miles lower down than where we crossed, and at a place called Gocawk. Several of us rode out to see them, and were not a little gratified. It was one of the grandest scenes I ever beheld. Close to the fall the river is contracted by two large rocks to the breadth of about seventy yards. Falling thence, perpendicularly, in one vast sheet, to the depth of about two hundred feet, it is lost for a time amidst a mass of foam and

spray; till, seemingly proud of its terrific leap, it is seen emerging from its frothy pool, bearing away on its ruffled bosom the snowy emblems of its recent feat. It was really a most stupendous sight; and, the river being at its height, we could not have seen it to greater advantage.

We found the Toombudra, like the other rivers which we had crossed, full from bank to bank; but, being better provided with boats, and its breadth not being above half that of the Kistnah, we were not long in crossing it.

CHAPTER XV.

The Author visits his brother at Bednore.—Feelings on that occasion.—Sets out for the Presidency.—Equipage of an Officer travelling.—Hindoo Women.—Jugglers and Tumblers.—Dancing Girls.—Dancing Snakes.—Fung teeth of venomous kinds.—Habits of Europeans travelling.—Indian Game.—Sporting.—Bloodsuckers.—Pellet-bow.—Ingenious mode of catching Wild Ducks. The Author meets with an odd character.—Arrives at Nundidroog.—Adventure there.

Here I separated from Colonel Hill's detachment, having obtained leave to visit my brother, who commanded the fort of Bednore, the capital of a province of that name, situated near the western Ghauts. In proceeding thither I passed through a wild, but beautifully romantic country, abounding in rich views, in which the graceful bamboo-tree formed a principal feature. When many of these trees grow together, as in a jungle or forest, and form, as they do, an impenetrable thicket, the bamboo is by no means an agreeable object; but, when scattered in clumps over the plain, like so many thick plumes of ostrich feathers, they have a most pleasing effect. I have often thought, as I have viewed them with delight, what an English gentleman would give to have a few of them in his park or lawn.

The meeting of a brother in a distant clime is to the heart as the fountain in the desert to the parched lips of the traveller. As the verdant circle which surrounds the gifted spot reminds the weary pilgrim of the country which he has left, so does the long looked-for moment of fraternal embrace, freshened by the springs of memory, assume the vivid tint of the days of our youth. We breathe, as it were, the atmosphere of home! Oh sweet delusion! But alas! how transitory! how soon does reason—sad, sober reason—dash from our lips the Circean cup!

But still there was enough of reality to make us happy. We were two links broken from the family chain; and we clung the closer to each other, as there were none present to share our affections. We talked of days and scenes gone by—of the cheerful home—the happy holidays—the giddy games and dangerous feats of youth—the well remembered prank—even the chidings of parental authority, expressed in the "mighty well gentlemen"—"with the blessing of God you shall have it," and other similar threats which followed detected mischief. The "hoyty toyty" of the old grandmother; yea, the mighty birch itself, fruitful source of tears, became, in the ever changing hand of Time, so many subjects of mirth. In short, we laughed till the tears chased each other down our cheeks as we rolled in convulsions on the floor. And, need I say it, often would the softer tear of gratitude steal from our eyes as we brought to mind all the instances of tender care and anxiety in the best of parents.

But this could not last long. The time must come, as soon it did, when the gleams of sunshine must be changed for the vicissitudes of a wandering life. After spending two happy months, I bade adieu to my brother, and bent my steps towards the Presidency.

Here I am then again *en route*, and, as I have but little else wherewith to amuse the reader, he shall e'en have a description of my travelling equipage and establishment at this period, which will convey to him a tolerably good idea of the turn-out of a subaltern on the Madras

side of India. First, I had a tent twelve feet square, having walls about six feet high, and a spacious fly above the roof, to catch a few of the solar rays *en passant*. Then I had (which was a cut above the common) a bell-tent for my servants and baggage. Now to carry the above I was obliged to have four bullocks, or one stout camel. The latter happened to be my lot, lucky sub! Then I could not do without three bullocks, or one camel more, to carry clothes, liquors, cooking apparatus, &c.; and, if I dispensed with *coolies* or porters, (troublesome things in a campaign, for they have this disadvantage compared with other beasts of burthen, that when it no longer suits them to remain, they are apt to leave you in the lurch,) I must e'en have had another camel, or an equal proportion of bullocks to carry mess-trunks, table, bed, and the like. Then, as to servants, I had a head-man or butler, a Moor-boy who waited behind my chair at table, and helped me to dress; a maty-boy who cleaned boots, shoes, knives, &c. and carried my chair; a cook, (if I did not belong to a mess,) a horse-keeper and grass-cutter (generally the wife of the former) for my horse, one lascar for my tent, and one camel-keeper, or two bullock-drivers, for my team; making a total, supposing coolies to be dispensed with, of eight or nine persons, one horse, three camels, or ten bullocks. The above however, it must be confessed, is the establishment of a subaltern in easy circumstances: should his circumstances be rather uneasy, (as I believe are those of most subalterns of the line,) why he must spare a camel or its proportion of bullocks, and a servant or two; contenting himself, at the outside, with one shirt a day, and brandy pawny instead of wine. As to beer, if a subaltern attempts to taste it at his own expense in the field, I give him up as an incorrigible spendthrift. What are the equipage and establishments of the higher ranks may be inferred from the above.

If you have one or two companions, the travelling in India is pleasant. On the well frequented roads, in the Company's territories, you are generally provided with choultries, built purposely for European travellers;

which obviate the necessity of pitching your tents. But, if you fail to meet with this accommodation, you have your tents pitched in some shady grove, if such is to be found, near a tank, where, as you recline on your couch, you may contemplate the lazy Brahmin performing his daily ablutions, or the elegant figures, the graceful carriage, and the becoming costume, of the women as they come to fetch water; for the Hindoos have little of that jealousy of their females which characterizes the suspicious Mussulman, whose habits and religion have taught him to brutalize the softer sex. What is to be seen of that disgraceful feeling among the upper classes of Hindoos is doubtless copied from their former conquerors; consequently the Hindoo women of the middling and higher casts are remarkable for their chastity and modest demeanour, at least towards Europeans. Sometimes a strolling juggler or band of tumblers will request leave to exhibit their dexterity or agility before you; when they will swallow their swords, make their snakes dance, and play such tricks without any fuss, and with so little apparatus, as would make the most scientific conjuror in Europe stare. The tumblers, too, will perform feats on a simple piece of sod which all Astley's or the Circus could not equal. The snakes used for dancing, although generally of the most venomous kinds, have their fang-teeth extracted, so that they are rendered perfectly innocuous. This tooth is in shape like the claw of a dog, or the tusk of a boar, and has a hole running through it communicating with a bag of venom. It is capable of being moved up and down in the jaw, like the cock of a gun lock; commonly it lies close down below the level of the other teeth, with the point downwards. But when the animal is enraged it has the power of raising this tooth, so that, when forced back by coming in contact with the part bitten, it presses on the bag, the venom of which then spouts through the hole of the tooth into the wound. You are also sometimes entertained with a visit from the dancing-girls of some neighbouring pagoda, who, in the intervals of their religious duties of dancing before

their god, are permitted to pick up a little of the mammon of unrighteousness by all means in their power. These are generally accompanied by an uncommonly ugly old fellow, who, while he gives the time to their feet by thrumming with his fingers on a tom-tom, or a kind of drum, serves as a foil to their charms. Hindostan is the only country I ever was in where there is no such thing as national music. I never heard but one Hindostanee air that appeared to me to have any music in it; this was called Chundah's song, as being the tune to which a celebrated Hydrabad dancing-girl of that name used to dance; and I believe it owes most of its beauty and celebrity to the talents of the master of the band of the 33d regiment, who harmonized it. All their musical instruments are the most barbarous discordant things that can be imagined. In fact, they have no music in their souls.

Should the country through which you are travelling be favourable for coursing, and you have dogs with you, that diversion is generally enjoyed during the day's march; and, should it afford game, your gun supplies you with amusement after breakfast till you are tired; when throwing yourself on your couch in a pair of loose thin trowsers, you read till it is time to dress for dinner. Few now give way to that pernicious practice of sleeping after tiffin, once so much the custom in India. For my part, I never fell asleep in the middle of the day, unless from excessive fatigue, without waking with a most unpleasant sensation, a sure sign that it is not salutary.

The high grounds of India, when scattered over with underwood, generally supply abundance of hares, partridges, and rock-pigeons, and sometimes floriki, which is almost the only bird in India, wild duck excepted, that has a true game flavour. It is, I think, of the same species as the bustard, though much smaller, and more delicately plumed. Few sportsmen think of using dogs to find their game; for, except very early in the morning, the scent does not lie. Two or three beaters supply their place. Perhaps the best shooting in India is that

of snipes, which for some months after the monsoon, are in great abundance under the banks of tanks in the *paddy* fields, (rice grounds,) or any other moist spot. About the middle of the day they lie well, and not flying so rapidly as the snipe in England, are an easy shot. I have known some expert shots kill as many as thirty couple in a day. But the sport is very fatiguing, and, if long persisted in, dangerous; for you have generally to wade up to your knees in mud and water, under a burning sun. Very often, after a good day's sport, the slaughter has been so great that nothing is eaten but the trails of the birds, being either spread on toast or made into a pie. Indeed, except for a very short time in the season, the flesh of the bird is not very palatable. The numerous tanks in some parts of India furnish abundance of wild fowl, of almost every species. These are easily killed, and are often of excellent flavour. The mode which the natives sometimes adopt to catch them is ingenious and diverting. A man goes into the water with a chatty, that is, a large, round, thin earthen pot on his head, with holes in it, for him to see through; and advancing very slowly, with nothing but the chatty above water, generally succeeds in getting among the swimming flock without disturbing them. When there, he has nothing to do but to pull them under water by the legs one by one, and to deposit them in his bag, the other birds never suspecting but that their comrades have taken a dive in search of food. Notwithstanding the fatigue undergone in sporting in India, there is a feeling of freedom attending it not to be experienced in more civilized and more closely inhabited countries, where the restrictions necessary to the preservation of game not only expose the qualified sportsman to frequent collision with surly keepers, but where even the privileged few, who have manners of their own, cannot enjoy the sport without being fenced round by steel-traps and spring-guns, and all the terrors of the law. Sporting in India is not, however, without its dangers; for in the jungles you are apt to encounter a tiger rather suddenly; but what is worse, (for the tiger will generally avoid you,) is

the chance of treading on a snake, of which there are many venomous kinds in India, particularly the *cobra de capello*, as it is called by the Portuguese, or hooded snake, whose sting is certain death within the hour. Those officers who have no taste for field-sports must find the life in India a dreary one, unless they are fond of reading or drawing, for both which occupations ample leisure is afforded, and for the latter abundance of novel and interesting subjects. I would therefore advise any young man who has the least taste for drawing, to study that pleasing art and most useful pastime, before he goes out to India. He should also lay in as much food for the mind as he can conveniently carry; for, except at the Presidency, he will find no circulating libraries to supply his appetite for reading. I recollect hearing that an officer, whose name I forget, was shut up for many years in one of Hyder's dungeons, with no companion but Johnson's Dictionary, of which, I should think, by the time his confinement was over, he must have been as much tired as the learned lexicographer himself, who pettishly compared his labours to those of a "fool, a drudge, or an ass."

Some, who are too indolent for sporting, and too idle to read, will saunter forth with their pellet-bow, and make war upon that poor innocent reptile, the blood-sucker, an animal of the lizard species, somewhat like the camelion in shape, but of most disgusting appearance, having a frightful looking head with red pendent gills. These poor animals, instead of running off when assailed, will stand bobbing their heads up and down, as if they thought to frighten their enemies away. Indeed, the first time I saw one, it effectually succeeded with me. The pellet-bow used on these occasions is constructed like a common bow, except that it has two strings, kept a short distance apart by a piece of stick, and connected in the centre by a piece of tape. In this tape the ball, generally composed of dried clay and oil, is deposited, and, being seized between the finger and thumb, is drawn back and fired just like an arrow. With the young practitioner there is the danger of hitting the thumb of

the hand which holds the bow ; and many a hard blow is sustained in this way, till practice has made perfect. Some persons are so expert in the use of this missile, that they will easily hit a crow flying at a moderate distance; and with such force is the pellet projected, that I knew a challenge given to encounter any person with a gun, provided the gunner was not to begin to load before the signal for combat; and I have no doubt the bowman would have gained the day. I had once thoughts of engaging in the glass-trade, and then making the tour of England to instruct schoolboys in the use of this ingenious contrivance for breaking windows, and extinguishing lights, natural and artificial.

In returning to the Presidency, I passed over nearly the same ground that I did in advancing with the army, except that I made a slight deviation from the direct road to visit an acquaintance at Nundydroog. This is a strong hill-fort, about thirty miles north of Bangalore. It was besieged and taken by a detachment from Lord Cornwallis' army in the first war with Tippoo. The climate is here considered to be cooler than in any part of the peninsula; and on the top of the mountain, which is very lofty, all the vegetables or fruits of Europe can be grown with facility. Here I just came in for the tail of the north-east monsoon, and was detained for some days by the hardest rain I ever remember, and through which I had a narrow escape of my life. I was lodged in a house which, having formerly belonged to a native, was, as is usual in the Mysore country, composed of mud walls, and a terraced roof of the same material. In the middle of the night, one of the walls supporting the rafters of the room in which I was asleep suddenly gave way, and the roof following it of course, I was completely enveloped in the ruins. Fortunately for me, however, I was sleeping against the opposite wall, which, having remained firm, supported the timbers on that side, so that I was saved from being crushed to death. My alarm, on being awakened by the crash, may be conceived; nor did it end here; for, though my cries attracted the domestics, it was not till daylight that they could extricate

me from my unpleasant situation : so that I remained some hours in dread that the rain, which continued to fall in torrents, and which now found its way to my bed, or the bungling attempts of my servants to effect a passage for me, would cause the only prop that sheltered me from destruction to give way. Anticipating something of the kind, I crept under the bedstead, where I remained on my hands and knees, in a puddle of water, trembling and shivering, till morning.

A few miles from Nundydroog I fell in with a comical old fellow in the shape of a conductor of ordnance (gun-doctor, as Blacky would call him,) who, in the few hours I spent in his company, afforded me a good deal of amusement. After my tents had been pitched, and I had breakfasted, I perceived him passing by on his jaded tattoo, attended by his black boy, who acted in the capacities of cook, valet, and bullock-driver, and I sent to request him to stop and refresh himself: he willingly complied. In England the first words that are exchanged on meeting, after the usual salutations, have generally reference to the weather ; and very properly so, for in such a climate what subject can furnish more variety, or be more interesting to all ! But, in India, except by giving vent to an occasional ejaculation, such as that with which the midshipman, in the warmth of his body, indulged his titled partner during a dance in the Madras dog-days, "Bloody hot, my lady !" suiting, at the same time, the action to the word, by passing the salt-water calico across his dewy forehead, no one but a new comer ever thinks of introducing a subject which, nine times out of ten, must lead to the reiterated remark of "fine sun-shiny morning !" But, in lieu of this confessedly *dry* topic, you generally ask a person on entering your house or tent, to take something to drink ; and, it must be acknowledged, that among the English in India a great deal more liquor is consumed in this way than is either beneficial to the stomach of the consumer or the pocket of the donor. This customary invitation having been accepted, a servant brought some wine and water, and my guest filled his tumbler half full of liquor. Con-

ceiving, from the cut of his jib and the colour of his bowsprit, which was somewhat rubicund, that he was any thing but a water-drinker, I observed to him, (though the portion was considerably more than I should have taken myself,) that he took his wine and water rather weak. "By the powers, sir," said he, "I thought it had been brandy." He took a little more at my suggestion, but cast a look at the water as if he thought the beverage already contained a fair quantity of the aqueous fluid. Before he retired I persuaded him to take his dinner with me. Seeing some books on the table, he begged to borrow one, to amuse himself till evening, more I believe, to show me his capability of reading it, than to gratify his inclination in doing so. I asked him how he liked poetry. "Potry, sir? No great *fist* at potry." "Then you prefer prose?" "As to that, I never heard of the book; but if so be as it's any thing like Roderick Random, or the Pilgrim's Progress, I'll just thank you for the loan of it." I was not a little amused with the association, and accommodated him with the former, as the latter, I presume from want of taste, on my part, was not comprised in my travelling library.

He returned at six, and entertained me over his grog with anecdotes of the earlier campaigns of the British in India, in which he had served as a private of artillery. He was taken prisoner in Baily's defeat, and, by contriving to pass for an officer, escaped the fate of the unfortunate soldiers, whom that tyrant Hyder caused to be precipitated from the Mysore Tarpeian, the rock of Severndroog, as not worth ransom. The officers were retained as a kind of hostages, ready to be sacrificed or liberated as policy might dictate. My guest was confined with many others, among whom, I believe, was Sir David Baird, for many years in a dungeon in Seringapatam. This hole was so infested by rats and bandicoots, (a frightful animal peculiar to the East Indies, in appearance between a rat and a pig, but of the former genus,) that their lives were made still more miserable by these vermin, which would demolish their scanty provision, even before their faces; till, having devised an ingenious kind

of trap for catching them, the captives were somewhat relieved from their intrusions. They would place a bait on the ground, and then lie down on their sides, with the elbow extended, and the arm brought up to support the head, in such a manner that, when the arm was lowered and stretched out, the hand would just reach the bait. In this way, having feigned sleep, they would watch the approach of their foe, and while he was nibbling at the bait, they would, by a sudden jerk of the arm, to which the elbow-joint formed a kind of spring, descend upon him with the whole weight of their knuckles, with such force and celerity that he could seldom escape.

In the Company's service a number of old soldiers are provided for by situations in the Ordnance, as every station or fort, however small, must have some one to take care of the stores. Most of these are married to half-cast women, and, being generally men who have stood the climate well, and whose stomachs have borne the fiery ordeal of the arrack-shop uninjured, they often live happily enough to a good old age. An European who conducts himself decently is sure to prosper in the Company's service, especially if he has had any education whatever; for the majority that enlist (or rather, that used to enlist) in their service, were such rascals, or such drunkards, as to be unworthy of trust. A man of fallen fortunes therefore, provided his constitution be good, cannot do better than enter this service even as a private, upon the principle of the Scotch Militiaman, who, when asked why he preferred volunteering into an English regiment, instead of one of his own national ones, replied, "They can aw read and write there." Many individuals have thus risen to high rank, and proved ornaments to their profession, while some, whom fortune has equally favoured, it must be confessed, always bear the stamp of their low origin. One of the latter in particular I recollect, who, without boasting the noble parentage of Marshal Saxe, bore a strong resemblance to that distinguished captain in his literary attainments. From a private he had attained the highest rank in the service, and was esteemed

a good officer; but, unfortunately, his exalted station only served to make the deficiency of his education the more conspicuous. From among the many stories told against him, I will select one as a specimen. Having had occasion to bring an officer to a court martial, for insubordinate conduct, one of the charges which he preferred was, "for flying in my face,"—a foul charge, it must be owned.

Having experienced no other adventure worth relating on my journey, I shall e'en save the courteous reader the trouble of following me over some hundred miles of road, by at once landing myself safe at Madras; and thus prevent the *uncourteous*, who may not think himself bound to keep company with the author, unless when it pleases him, from wounding my auctorial *amour propre*, by skipping over my pages.

CHAPTER XVI.

The Author arrives at the Presidency.—Appearance of Madras after the Monsoon.—Races.—The Author appointed to a situation at the Presidency.—Habits of the European Inhabitants.—State of Religion in India.—Mode of keeping the Sabbath.—Company's Chaplains.—Anecdote of one.—Native Christians.—Irreligious example set by the Europeans.—Portuguese in India.—Description of Madras.—The Author is appointed to a situation in the Centre Division of the Army.—Description of Vellore.—Alligators.—Tippoo Saib's Sons.—Mutiny at Vellore.—Anecdotes connected with it.—Colonel Gillespie.

I ARRIVED at the Presidency in the pleasantest time of the year, just after the monsoon, when all nature seems to have been beautified with a fresh coat of paint. The weather is then comparatively cool, and great pains are taken to make the most of it. This is the time for the annual races, which are well kept up and attended.

The prizes are good, and, of course, the best horses in India run for them. Such is the speed and bottom of the Arab, that I have seen an animal, not more than fourteen hands high, which would be little more than a pony in England, run neck and neck with an English horse of twice his height, and which had distinguished himself on the turf before he was sent out.

Being now appointed assistant to the superintending engineer at the Presidency, my mornings were fully occupied in my professional duties; but in the evening I fell into nearly the same round of amusements that I enjoyed when before at the Presidency, only I partook of them with more moderation. I passed nearly the same kind of life as most young men in office, except that my mornings were spent mostly out of doors in superintending the various military and civil buildings in progress. It may not be uninteresting to the reader to know something of the manner in which the Company's servants pass their time, and of the habits of society at the Presidency.

People generally rise early in India. If disposed for a constitutional ride, they must be out of bed at daybreak. Throwing on a riding dress, they gallop for an hour or two, and return in time to dress for breakfast, which is generally served at eight o'clock, and consists commonly of excellent bread, butter cooled in saltpetre, fresh fish, and green tea. After breakfast they sit bubbling away at the hooka, if they keep one, with a newspaper or book; or they saunter to the stable, and inspect the stud, till about eleven, when they step into their palanquins, (for it is to be presumed that they have garden-houses,) and are borne to their office in the Fort. There they remain, having taken a slight tiffin in the interim, till about four o'clock, when they return home and join their ladies, that is, supposing them to be married men, in the barouche for the drive on the Mount Road; or else they mount their horses, and repair to that pleasant promenade, which may be compared to the *Corso* at Rome, or the *Champs Elysées* at Paris, where all the beauty and fashion of the Presidency assemble regularly

every evening, to see and be seen. On their return home they retire to dress for dinner at seven o'clock, and spend the remainder of the evening in the manner usual among the genteel circles in England. I lament to say, however, that the mode of passing the Sunday, when I was in India, was neither so rational nor so innocent. Nothwithstanding the example of Lord William Bentinck, the Governor, and his virtuous lady, few attended divine worship. Many of the elder inhabitants among the English, who ought to have set a better example, used to assemble at each others' houses to pass the leisure hours afforded by the Sabbath in playing at billiards or cards, when considerable sums were won and lost. Indeed, when I first arrived in India, there was a general disregard of religion among the European part of the population. This might have been owing, in a great measure, to the want of places of worship, but more than all, to the deficiency of pastors, there being scarcely any of the former, and the few there were of the latter, in the shape of Company's Chaplains, being in general less calculated to lead the stray sheep into the fold than to drive them out of it. One of these pious ministers was a notorious bruiser, and another, whom I well recollect, and who, by the by, swore like a trooper, being one day asked to tiffin and a rubber of whist, delivered his reluctant excuses by saying, that "he had a d—d soldier to bury."

This general disregard of all religious observances did not tend to raise us in the estimation of the natives, different as their tenets are from ours. On the contrary, I have often heard them express their surprise at the little respect shewn to religion by Europeans. A native once asked an English gentleman, who used to walk up and down his veranda at regular hours, whether those were his times of prayer, for he had never seen him attend a place of worship, and had, in common with his countrymen, no notion of a man walking for the sake of exercise. Indeed, so little respect appeared to be entertained by the English for their religion, and in so little estimation did they hold the natives of the same persua-

sion as themselves, from their generally abandoned characters, that a black Christian would, in most instances, rather confess himself to be an outcast Hindoo than a member of the Church of Christ. Though it must be confessed that the Europeans had some grounds for the contempt in which they held the native Christians, yet the depravity of the latter was, in a great measure, their own fault, being chiefly attributable to the influence of their own example in religious matters, and to the little countenance afforded to Christian worship in any shape; while these people, being thrown more among the European soldiers than others of their own nation, were led, by the natural process of imitation, to engraft on their own vices the worst points in the characters of their associates. Allowing for the increase of the number of half-casts, who naturally follow the religion of their fathers, I may venture to assert that, from the establishment of the English in India to the time of my departure, the Christian community had diminished in number as it certainly had in respectability.

Excepting those converted by the Danish missionaries at Tranquebar, who have been supported in their labours by the British Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the native Christians are generally of the Catholic persuasion, being the fruits of the labours of the Portuguese, who have always maintained the Catholic worship in all the splendour and respectability in their power. Although they have lost all temporal dominion in India, excepting the sovereignty of the town and island of Goa. they have still many Bishops scattered about in our possessions. One is established at St. Thome, a small town near Madras, and presides over the Catholic population of the British settlement, though, for want of proper support, the influence and importance of his See has been considerably diminished. There are still the remains of a Catholic church on the top of St. Thomas' mount, the present artillery station, whence the Apostle, from whom it takes its name, is said to have preached his first sermon to the heathen. But unfortunately for them, the Portuguese name can now confer neither

consequence nor respectability in India; for so low has it fallen in public opinion, that any man of colour, however dark, who wears a hat, passes for a descendant of the companions of the renowned Vasco de Gama. From what I have said above respecting the little support given by the English to Christianity, I would not be supposed to advocate the missionary system in the then state of things; for at best the only converts that could be obtain consisted of outcast Hindoos, or degraded Mussulmans, whose accession neither added respectability to the Christian community, nor tended in the remotest degree to forward the grand object which every pious Christian must have at heart—the conversion of the mass of the natives to the faith of Christ. In another part of these memoirs I shall take occasion to give my opinion respecting the best mode of effecting this object. In the mean time I am happy to observe that religious matters are now on a better footing, and that a more strict observance of religious duties is enjoined and practised; and indeed, before I left India, I had the satisfaction of displaying my architectural talents in the erection of a church or two; and since that time places of Christian worship have become general at all the stations of the army.

To describe localities is at all times tedious; and, unless there is something particularly interesting in the spot, either technically or historically, it must be equally tedious to have to read such a description: I shall, therefore, I trust, be readily excused for giving no further account of Madras than this; that it consists of a very strong fort, built on the best principles of the art, a large and populous black town, inhabited by people of almost all shades, castes, and nations, with country-houses and gardens extending to the distance of many miles, occupied by the English; and that it is, on the whole, a rich, populous, and very pretty place, particularly for a month after the monsoon; in fact, worthy of being the capital of a large portion of the British dominions in India.

After remaining about a year at the Presidency, I was ordered to what was called the centre division of

the army, that I might superintend various works to be carried on at three places within a short distance of each other, namely, Vellore, Arcot, and Chittoor. The first is a well-known fortress, rendered famous in recent times by the mutiny of the sepoys in 1806. The second is a large cavalry cantonment, near a town noted in the earlier times of the British in India. The last was a ruined fort, in the centre of some Polygar chiefs, and which it was intended to repair for the protection of one of the courts of justice to be established there. Here I was, in a great measure my own master. I had just sufficient occupation to prevent time from hanging heavily on my hands ; and, by passing from one of these stations to the other, I could change both scene and society at pleasure. At Arcot I had the satisfaction of enjoying the company of my old friends of the 19th dragoons, who were so kind as to give me a general invitation to their mess, (it being contrary to their rules to admit honorary members,) a privilege of which I gladly availed myself; for, besides the general respect which I entertained for that gallant regiment, there were some individuals in it with whom I was on terms of the closest intimacy.

In this situation I may say I passed a happy life. The profits of my employment, although not such as to enable me to lay by money, were sufficient to make my circumstances easy. My constitution had as yet suffered little from the climate ; and as my habits were temperate, I enjoyed good health, with only an occasional attack of the yellow monster, caused by the almost constant exposure to the sun, to which the duties of my profession and a fondness for field-sports subjected me. A few grains of calomel, however, laid on the scent, followed up by that expert whipper-in from Epsom, soon compelled the enemy to break cover.

I had not been on this station above a few months, when the famous mutiny at Vellore broke out ; the circumstances of which, I may say, in the words of the pious Æneas, (thanks to Dr. Gabell's apple twigs, and to rather sensitive, if not very shrewd *parts*, I am ena-

bled to quote them,) "*Quaque ipse miserrima vidi,*" it falls within the scope of my memoirs to relate. Most providentially, I may add, it is in my power to relate them; for nothing but accident prevented me from being one of the sufferers on that melancholy occasion. Vellore was my head-quarters at that period, and it was only a sudden call to inspect some of my works at Arcot that took me off a day or two before the catastrophe.

It will be necessary, before I proceed, to give a description of the theatre on which this dreadful tragedy was acted. Vellore is a fortress of considerable antiquity, situated about ninety miles from Madras, remarkable for the solidity of its walls and the capacity of its ditch, which is renowned for the number and size of the alligators it contains. Though, of course, not built on the European principles of fortification, it is nevertheless considered a place of strength; and, in consequence of the security afforded by the ditch and its voracious inhabitants, it was deemed, after the capture of Seringapatam, a fit place for the confinement of the sons of Tippoo Sultan, who, with their families, were here maintained in a suitable manner, having had a handsome palace built for them, and every thing consistent with the security of their persons provided for their comfort. At the time of which I am treating, the garrison consisted of four companies of his Majesty's 69th regiment, two battalions of sepoys, and a few invalid artillerymen.

The mutiny, which, I believe, was only the root of a deep-laid plot, having ramifications more extensive than it was deemed prudent to acknowledge, was planned to have broken out some days later than it actually did, in which case it would, in all probability have been accompanied by simultaneous movements in other stations of the army. But the apprehensions of discovery, from a circumstance which I shall hereafter mention, joined to the favourable opportunity which presented itself, urged its premature explosion. This opportunity was afforded by the appointment of a field-day for one

of the native battalions early on the morning of the 10th July, 1806; it being usual on these occasions for the sepoys, instead of remaining in their huts outside the walls, to sleep in their barracks or place of arms, in the fort, the night preceding, in order that they might be ready to get under arms without delay in the morning. This battalion was the 1st of the 23d regiment; the other in garrison was the 1st of the 1st regiment—the *first* and *last* numbers of the Madras army. It being the turn of the latter regiment to furnish the guards, a large majority of the sepoys composing the garrison were thus necessarily within the walls on the night in question.

The immediate object of the mutineers was the massacre of all the Europeans in the garrison, and the keeping possession of the fort in the name of Tippoo's descendants. What were the ulterior objects has been left, in a great measure, to conjecture; for whatever information the government may have obtained on this point has been wisely kept secret. I believe that the plot was entirely a Mussulman plot; and that, whatever might have been the discontent of the Hindoo sepoys, (afterwards to be worked upon,) they were not, upon this occasion, let into the secret, although intended to be employed as tools in the consummation of the deed. The scheme was principally hatched in the 1st regiment, which was chiefly composed of Mussulmans; and, when it was resolved not to lose the opportunity already mentioned, the native adjutant, who was one of the chief conspirators, contrived to put as many of his own faith on guard as he could; while such of the accomplices as could not be introduced by these means, found some pretence for sleeping in the barracks on that night, without exciting suspicion. Nothing could be better planned than was the whole business, and nothing could have commenced with better success. About four o'clock, the battalion of the 23d regiment having fallen in on their parade by order of their native officers, as if preparatory to the drill, and ball-cartridge having been served out to them, as if for practice at the target, a body of the sworn mutineers belonging to the 1st regiment, who had been told

off for that purpose, marched silently down to the main-guard, which was composed partly of Europeans, the massacre of whom was to be the signal for the general movement. As soon as this party had approached sufficiently near to give assistance if necessary, the sepoys of the main-guard, who had previously loaded their pieces privately, presented them at the breast of their sleeping or unheeding comrades, and soon dispatched them. At the report of the firing some of the principal mutineers came running to the sepoy barracks, calling out that the European soldiers had risen and were murdering all the natives they could lay their hands on; and that it was necessary that they should immediately march to the European barracks to put a stop to the business. Upon this the battalion on parade, the greater part of whom were Hindoos and ignorant of the plot, allowed themselves to be marched off, and drawn up round the 69th barracks, into the windows of which they poured a volley over the heads of the scarcely awaked soldiers, on whom they continued to keep up an incessant fire. Meanwhile parties of the 1st regiment, among whom were the principal conspirators, proceeded to secure all the posts of importance, and a select band commenced the bloody work of massacring the European officers, in which, unfortunately, they were but too successful. Having obtained possession of the powder-magazine and arsenal, the mutineers were enabled to supply the sepoys, engaged in firing into the European barracks, with ammunition; and, having also found two field-pieces ready mounted, they brought them down into an unoccupied barrack immediately fronting that of the 69th, and thence opened a fire on the latter building. In the mean time the Europeans, taken by surprise in this extraordinary manner, while naked and unarmed, and having no officers with them, became quite paralyzed, and lay crouching under their beds, or behind pillars, to screen themselves from the fire, without making any effort for their defence, except in the instance of a serjeant or two, who, rallying a few of the stoutest hearts, kept possession of the gate, from which

they made some successful sallies. It is quite surprising that the mutineers did not at this time, make some serious attempts to force the gate. Had they done so the surviving Europeans must have fallen an easy prey. The fact, I believe, is that they were afraid. The same feeling which has gained, and still maintains, our empire in the East, was probably the means of saving it on this occasion. As it was, the leaders proceeded to take their measures as if they considered themselves in complete possession of the fort. They sent and brought forth Futteh Hyder, the second son of Tippoo, (who was the only one of the princes supposed to be at all implicated in the plot,) and proclaimed him in the Palace-square as Sultaun, and then hoisted, on the flag-staff of the fort, the standard of Tippoo which they had prepared for that purpose.

Fortunately, however, the work of destruction had not been so complete as they wished; and there were still left some European officers, who had contrived to elude the search of the murderers. A few of these had managed to assemble in a house near a corner of the European barracks, where they lay concealed till the fire slackened, the sepoys having probably begun to disperse for plunder. Watching their opportunity, when there were but few of the mutineers at that point, they made a rush for the barracks; and having with the assistance of the soldiers inside, broken out one of the window-frames, they entered. Here they found the men in the situation I have already described; but, having succeeded with some difficulty in rallying them, and inspiring them with courage, they broke out two or three windows, and sallying forth, in number about 150, gained the ramparts, which were close by. Here, being joined by three officers of the 69th regiment, who occupied a house near the spot, and among whom was Captain Barrow, who assumed the command, they fought their way round to a cavalier at one angle of the fort, of which, having driven out the sepoys, they took possession. In this attack Captain Barrow was badly wounded and disabled. Leaving a party in charge of the cavalier, they

continued to drive the mutineers before them, along the rampart, till they reached the gate-way, behind which were some houses, where, having effected a lodgment, their post was tolerably secure.

Here, I grieve to state the fact, some of the officers, one of whom had displayed great energy and courage in rallying the men in the barracks, as well as in the subsequent proceedings, finding a rope which had been used to admit some of the mutineers from without, suspended to the wall, thought fit to withdraw with some of the soldiers to the hill-fort, which was at the opposite end of the pettah or town. Happily, however, they could not persuade many of the men to accompany them. Nearly a hundred of the 69th, who, after leaving the barracks, had behaved with great spirit, preferred remaining with two assistant-surgeons. These two gallant young men, Jones and Dean, whose names deserve a less perishable record than mine, leaving a party to keep possession of the gate-way, boldly pushed forward along the ramparts with about sixty men, and after some hard fighting, gained the flag-staff, from which they pulled down the rebellious standard. It was found to be nailed to the top of the staff, but a soldier of the 69th gallantly mounted the pole, under a heavy fire of musketry from the interior, and bore it away in triumph.

Matters were in this state when Colonel Gillespie arrived from Arcot, with a squadron of the 19th dragoons. It was about seven o'clock in the morning when the Colonel received information of the mutiny. The news was brought by an officer of one of the native regiments, who lived outside the fort. Without a moment's delay, the Colonel ordered out a squadron of the 19th, and pushed on for Vellore as fast as possible, having left orders for the remainder of the cavalry to follow as soon as they could be assembled. On reaching the scene of action, he found the gate, as I have already mentioned, in possession of the 69th regiment. He caused himself to be hoisted up on the ramparts, and his gallant example infused new spirit into the soldiers, who were thus

enabled, notwithstanding the failure of their ammunition, to keep possession of the gate-way and cavalier, till the arrival of the remainder of the cavalry, with the gallopers of the 19th dragoons.

Not having heard of the business till some time after Colonel Gillespie had set off for Vellore, I joined the 19th on the march, and came up with the guns of the regiment, just as they were approaching the gate-way. As soon as they had arrived, the Colonel ordered the artillery serjeant, who had the direction of them, to blow the gate open; but, observing that he did not appear to to know how to go to work, I ventured to give an opinion, when Colonel Gillespie immediately put the guns under my orders. I immediately directed the serjeant to load without shot, intending to run the muzzle of the gun close up the gate, and make use of it as a petard; but, finding that it was already loaded, and with shot, I told him to discharge the piece, and that he might as well lay it for the bolt, pointing with my sword to where I thought it was. He did so, and the gate flew open. Colonel Gillespie now informed us that he should descend the rampart with the party of the 69th, and gave orders that in a few minutes after the cavalry should gallop into the fort. Having given the Colonel a short start, we dashed sword in hand into the square, and most opportunely, for the small party of the 69th, finding themselves exposed to a heavy cross-fire on their front and flanks, had already begun to fall back. In the way, Colonel Gillespie was rode over by a dragoon, and a good deal bruised. On entering the square a smart fire was kept up on us for a short time; but no sooner was a front of one squadron formed on the parade, than the sepoys gave way in all directions, most of them flying towards the sally-port, which was at the opposite side of the fort to the gate-way. Being closely pursued by the cavalry, numbers were cut down in the streets and on the glacis, a troop of the 19th and some native cavalry having been sent round to intercept them, while those who had taken refuge in the buildings, were followed in and slain. In short, no quarter was given. The only spot where the

mutineers attempted any serious resistance was in the old European barracks, from the windows of which they kept up a galling fire on every one that passed, till a party of the 19th and Governor's body-guard, having dismounted, entered and put them to the sword. One of the first objects that struck me on entering the fort, was the body of Colonel M'Kerras, who commanded one of the sepoy battalions, lying in the middle of the parade. Shortly after that, we passed over the bodies of the European sick, lying in their hospital clothing, as they had been brought out and butchered in cold blood before the palace gates. "Revenge! revenge!" was the cry, and many a sword drank deep of the cowardly blood which flowed from hearts that could have prompted such a deed. For my own part, I must say, that nothing like pity entered my breast during that day. Upwards of a hundred sepoys, who had sought refuge in the palace, were brought out, and by Colonel Gillespie's order, placed under a wall, and fired at with canister-shot from the guns till they were all dispatched. Even this appalling sight I could look upon, I may almost say, with composure. It was an act of summary justice, and in every respect a most proper one; yet, at this distance of time, I find it a difficult matter to approve the deed, or to account for the feeling under which I then viewed it.

The number of Europeans who suffered on this occasion amounted to about 200. I have already mentioned how the poor sick soldiers were treated. The murder of the officers was almost as cowardly and atrocious; for most of them were attacked unarmed, in their houses, and some even in their beds. Poor Colonel Fancourt, who commanded the garrison, on hearing the firing at the main-guard, which was near his house, ran out in his dressing-gown to ascertain the cause, and was shot close to his own door, and died shortly after we entered the fort. A poor European drummer-boy of the guard, who, on the first alarm, ran away, beating the general, fell close to him. Colonel M'Kerras of the 23d regiment, alarmed at the same cause, was hastening towards

the barracks of his regiment, when he was met by a body of the mutineers, and shot on the parade.

Major Armstrong of the Company's service, an officer much esteemed, was passing the fort in his palanquin, when he heard the firing inside. Alighting, he walked up to the crest of the glacis, to make inquiries of the sepoys whom he saw on the ramparts. He was answered by a volley, which laid him dead on the spot. The other officers were killed in their houses. I saw them, poor fellows! just as they fell pierced with many wounds, their cold stiffened frames smeared with the dry clotted gore. With some of them I had been in habits of intimacy. Oh! it was a cruel sight! But the most affecting circumstance in this combination of horrors occurred in the murder of three officers belonging to one of the sepoy battalions. The particulars transpired on the trial of one of the mutineers, who was the principal agent in the business. These young men lived together in the same house, and, on the first alarm, naturally endeavoured to reach their barracks. But, on their way, finding how matters stood, and not being able to gain the European barracks, they ran back to their own house, and shut themselves up in a small room where there was a bath. They were pursued by the mutineers, who were already in the next room to them, when one of the young officers, hearing their voices, called out, "Now we are safe; for here is so and so," mentioning the name of a young sepoy who had been an orderly boy in his father's house when he commanded the regiment. Coming forth then from his hiding-place, followed by his comrades, in full reliance on the gratitude of one who had been his playmate when a boy, and whom, since he had joined the regiment, he had treated with every mark of affection and tenderness, he called out, "so and so, you will save us." The young villain replied with an abusive oath, and, levelling his piece, shot his old playfellow and benefactor through the body. The poor lads fled into the bath, and were there butchered. I saw their bodies just as they lay after the fatal deed—all

huddled together in the bath, with their clothes half burnt from the fire of the muskets.

Several were the hair-breadth escapes that took place on this occasion. A friend of mine lay concealed by a large bolster under his bed, while the murderers searched the room and the bed-clothes, for him. Conceive what his feeling must have been at the time, when he heard their feet within a yard of his head!

One, and only one, instance of fidelity and humanity occurred, in the case of the wife of the garrison-surgeon. On the breaking out of the business, a sepoy, whose wife had been nurse to one of Mrs. Pritchard's children, made his way into the house. Having directed the husband to a place of concealment on the roof, he covered Mrs. Pritchard with his cloak, carried her off to his barracks, and, having concealed her under some old clothes, kept watch over her till the entrance of the dragoons compelled him to fly for his life. What became of this good faithful creature was never known. Most probably he fell among the others. Indeed, it is much to be feared that many innocent suffered on this occasion. Being too few to resist the general impulse, they felt themselves urged on by the crowd, if not actively to join, at least to seem to participate, in deeds which their loyalty disapproved, and at which their hearts revolted.

The number of sepoys slain was very great. Upwards of 800 bodies were carried out of the fort, besides those who were killed after they escaped through the sally-port.

During the pursuit of the sepoys, I was passing by the grand magazine of the fort, when I observed the door to be open; fearing that some accident might happen if it remained in that state, (for there were already some buildings on fire at no great distance,) I dismounted for the purpose of securing the entrance by some means or other. What was my surprise to see issuing from it a party of dismounted dragoons, headed by an officer, with iron scabbards to their swords, and nails in their boots, rattling and trampling over heaps of loose

powder, with pistols cocked in their hands, ready to be discharged at any of the mutineers they might have found concealed therein! A single spark would have blown us all to ——, I cannot say heaven, for I believe few of us were just then fit to enter that state of bliss. But, for the sake of the millions of our profession who have preceded us in the path of glory or of honour, we may be allowed to hope that fate would not have consigned us to the eternal torments of that region which a respect for tender ears will not permit me to name.

The preservation of the fort of Vellore, and the defeat of a plot, the consequences of which might have been fatal to our Indian empire, are mainly to be attributed to the decision, promptitude, and gallantry of Colonel Gillespie, whose services were duly appreciated by his country, and by the East India Company, who voted him a handsome present. Next to him, I think those two assistant surgeons, whom I have already mentioned; however humble their stations, deserve the largest share of praise; for, had it not been for them, the fort would have been abandoned to the mutineers long before Colonel Gillespie came up. As it was, they did not receive the credit due to them for their services; which omission was chiefly owing to their having been engaged in that gallant attack which they made on the sepoys at the flag-staff, when Colonel Gillespie was hoisted up on the rampart, by which means they escaped his observation, at what appeared to him the most critical moment.

CHAPTER XVII.

Conflicting opinions respecting the cause of the Mutiny.—Religious prejudices of the Hindoos.—Remarks on Missionaries.—Execution of Conspirators.—Remarkable occurrence on that occasion. Further Anecdotes connected with the Mutiny.—The Mysore Princes sent to Calcutta.—Extraordinary sensation produced in India by the Mutiny.—Death of an Officer by falling down a well.

Various were the opinions regarding the origin and cause of this celebrated mutiny. Some attribute it to the general disaffection of the sepoys, from a notion supposed to pervade their minds, that it was our intention to make Christians of them. No doubt there had been, for some time past, a disposition evinced at the head-quarters of the army, to make impolitic and unnecessary encroachments on their prejudices in regard to dress, &c. particularly in the proposed alteration of their turban, so as to assimilate it more to the cap of the Europeans, as well as in the prohibition to wear marks of casts on their foreheads; and there might also have been something to excite their suspicion in recent orders issued by the government respecting missionaries, religious tracts, &c. all which circumstances were doubtless laid hold of by the enemies of the British Government, and magnified into a manifest disposition forcibly to convert the natives to Christianity.

These measures afforded matter for mutual recrimination between the Governor and Commander-in-chief, and were the cause that the Adjutant-General, Colonel Agnew, was ordered home to answer for his share in the business. But I firmly believe, after all, that the plot was entirely confined to the Mussulmans of the army. In fact, the Mahommedans are our natural enemies; for

it is we chiefly that have supplanted them in the empire of India, and I am convinced that, at any time, they would be willing and ready, one and all, to take their share in expelling us from the East. Had the Vellore business succeeded, I have no doubt there would have been a general rising of the Mussulmans throughout India. All they wanted was a good beginning. For some time previously to the breaking out of the mutiny an unusual number of *fakirs*, or religious beggars of the Mahommedan persuasion, had been observed travelling about the country, without exciting any suspicion. Doubtless many of these were emissaries, for the purpose of stirring up the natives to rebel against the British government. Indeed, some persons went so far as to believe that some of them were agents of Buonaparte. That there was some degree of discontent among the Hindoo sepoys may reasonably be supposed from what I have already mentioned. In fact, to show the means that were taken to work upon their minds, it will only be necessary to mention, that many of them were persuaded into the belief that a new turn-screw, issued to the army about that time, which happened to be in the form of a cross, and which was to be worn suspended next the heart, was given them as a symbol of Christianity. Still, at the trials which took place subsequently to the mutiny, it did not appear that one of the Hindoos was implicated in the plot, whatever part they might afterwards have taken, when it broke out.

This discontent, however, which was generally allowed to have pervaded the Hindoo sepoys, though it might not have been productive of any immediate overt act prejudicial to our government, ought to be a warning to us how we interfere in the slightest degree with their religious prejudices. Surely, while we keep the substantials of power to ourselves, we may afford to allow them to nibble a little at the parings. In fact, it is through these prejudices alone that we govern the Hindoos. The power which they possess of having their own way in matters which are of no importance to us, satisfies and occupies their minds, and thus they submit to be ruled in

every thing else. It is both laudable and proper that we should endeavour to extend the faith of Christ; but in so doing we are not to endanger the power which alone supplies us with the means of effecting it. The system of sending missionaries to India, in the state in which things were when I was in that country, would have been, in my opinion, not only labour lost, but, in truth, retarding the accomplishment of the object in view. In a country where there is little or no religion, missionaries may be sent with safety and advantage. There they have a plain surface to work upon, with no obstruction but the ignorance or barbarism of the people; but, where a form of religion already exists, and that religion has a hold on the minds of the people, it cannot be supposed that persons coming for the avowed purpose of supplanting that religion will be favourably received. On the contrary, the interests of many, and the prejudices of all, will be roused to resist the encroachment. The only way, then, to convert such a people from their superstition is, to begin by educating them, or rather by causing them to educate themselves, so that they may be able to partake of the general civilization of the world. Only enlighten their minds, and they will throw aside their superstitions as a matter of course, and be ready to embrace the religion professed by the most polished portion of mankind. Then is the time to send in your missionaries; but, until this improvement is in progress, they are much better out of the way. In short, till you have pulled down one edifice, you cannot pretend to build up another in the place of it. There is no doubt that, after we have made Christians of the people, we shall not long retain dominion in the East. But this is no argument why, as fellow-creatures, we should forbear to enlighten their understandings, or why, as Christians, we should withhold from them the blessings of the Gospel. The college in Calcutta is an excellent institution, but religion should not be allowed to be mixed up in it. Similar institutions, under professors of Hindoo and Mahommedan creeds, previously prepared for that purpose, should be established throughout India. But this would

not suit the views of the Directors of the East India Company. Most of them know well what the consequences would be.

As the strength of the sepoy battalions in garrison at Vellore at the time of the mutiny amounted to about 1,600 men, not more than 900 of whom were killed, a considerable number must have escaped at the time. The greater part of these, however, were afterwards apprehended in different parts of the Peninsula, chiefly through the means of the police, which, when the plot had failed, zealously exerted itself in discovering the offenders. It is a question how far it would have gone, had the business turned out differently. As Burke justly observed, " our empire in India is one of opinion, not one of affection." Let the tide once set against us, and we shall soon be swept from these regions. Those of the prisoners taken in this way, who could be identified as having been at all active in the mutiny, were forwarded to Vellore, and there tried, as usual, by a court-martial composed of native officers. The greater part, after undergoing a useless confinement of some months, with the dread of death hanging over them, were liberated. Nineteen of the principal conspirators, or the most active agents in the catastrophe, were executed at Vellore, in various ways; some by hanging, some by being shot, and others by being blown away from guns. It is a curious fact, and well attested by many persons present, that a number of kites (a bird of prey very common in India) actually accompanied the melancholy party in their progress to the place of execution, as if they knew what was going on, and then kept hovering over the guns from which the culprits were to be blown away, flapping their wings, and shrieking, as if in anticipation of their bloody feast, till the fatal flash, which scattered the fragments of bodies in the air; when, pouncing on their prey, they positively caught in their talons many pieces of the quivering flesh before they could reach the ground! At sight of this the native troops employed on this duty, together with the crowd

which had assembled to witness the execution, set up a yell of horror.

Another circumstance, almost as extraordinary as the above, occurred in the case of a sepoy, who, sixteen days after the mutiny, was discovered in the inner part of the arsenal, where he had concealed himself on the entrance of the dragoons, and where he had remained during the whole of the time without tasting a morsel of food. Of course he was in the lowest state of exhaustion, and scarcely able to crawl; nevertheless he recovered.

A short time before the breaking out of the plot, a Mahommedan sepoy of the 1st regiment gave information of the conspiracy to his commanding officer; Colonel Forbes, who, treating the business lightly, ordered a Court of Inquiry, composed of native officers, to sit upon it. These, consisting chiefly of persons who were themselves conspirators, gave it as their opinion that the informer was insane; and he was put in close confinement accordingly. The fear of similar informations being given was generally understood to be the cause that the mutiny broke out sooner than was at first intended. The man was, of course, handsomely provided for by Government.

In the course of this business a singular instance of courage, sense of duty, and determination, was evinced by a soldier of the 69th, who stood sentry over the magazine. In the midst of the work of slaughter, an officer, who was running for his life, passed him at his post, and, seeing him walking up and down with the utmost composure, hastily asked if he knew that the sepoys were murdering all the Europeans. "I thought as much," he replied. "Why don't you fly for your life then?" exclaimed the officer. "I was posted here," he said, "and it is my duty to remain. I've six rounds in my pouch, and I'll sell my life dearly." The noble fellow was afterwards found dead on his post. The investigations which took place after the mutiny by order of the Government, were not made public; but, from what I

could learn, not more than one of the sons of Tippoo, namely Futteh Hyder, was at all implicated in the plot. As soon, however, as it could be done with convenience, they were removed to Calcutta, where they have since remained. This was a politic measure in more respects than one ; for it not only removed them out of the reach of former friends and adherents of their family, but it appeared to throw the odium of the conspiracy upon them, instead of permitting it to rest on the native army, whose loyalty and attachment it would not have been prudent to question.

This dreadful mutiny produced, as might be supposed, an extraordinary sensation throughout our Indian possessions. No one knew how deeply rooted or extensive might have been the plot. The Europeans seemed to stand as it were on a volcano, one eruption of which had already been experienced, and which might be succeeded by others, they knew not how soon. Indeed, it was a considerable time before this feeling altogether subsided.

Not long after the mutiny I was witness of a shocking accident which happened to an officer who had escaped the massacre, only to lose his life, if not in so horrid, at least in a much more painful way. A fire had broken out in a village a mile or two from the fort, and the troops having been ordered out to assist in extinguishing it, I rode on, accompanied by this officer, to ascertain how the services of the soldiers could be best applied. When we had arrived within a short distance of the village, we quitted the road, and struck across the fields. Riding at a gallop by the light of the conflagration, my companion suddenly disappeared from my side. I thought it extraordinary ; but attributed my having lost sight of him to some optical impediment caused by the glare of the fire : so I pursued my way. After the fire was got under, I was returning homeward nearly over the same ground that I had passed in coming, when I heard something like a groan at a short distance. I listened : the noise was repeated, and seemed to issue from the bowels of the earth. I rode towards the spot whence it seem-

ed to proceed, and saw before me something like a low wall. I dismounted, and found that it was the parapet of a large well, from the bottom of which issued groans, like those of a man in distress. I immediately bethought me that it must be my missing comrade, who had fallen in at the moment I lost sight of him. I rode off instantly to the nearest house, and procured a lantern and persons to assist me. On lowering the lantern into the well, we saw my poor friend lying at the bottom, with his horse over him. With great difficulty we succeeded in getting him from under the horse, whose struggles rendered it a service of danger, and hoisted him up in a chair. When laid on the ground he repeatedly complained that he had a stone under his back. We looked, but no stone was there. The poor fellow's spine was broken. We had him taken home in a palanquin, but he only lingered in agony till next day, and then died. The horse had two legs broken, and was of course shot. How it happened that they were not both dashed to pieces, I cannot imagine, for the well was about forty feet deep, and lined with stone. There were marks in the parapet of the well, which showed that the horse had attempted to leap it.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Author is appointed to a situation at Bangalore.—Builds a new Cantonment.—Pleasant life led there.—Gambling in India. Melancholy instance of its effects.—Jack Dillon.—System of Sepoy Regiments.—Various Anecdotes.

I REMAINED on this station for some months longer; when, in consideration of my services at Vellore, on which the Government and Commander-in-chief were pleased to set a higher value than they strictly merited,

I was ordered up to Bangalore to fix on the site, and prepare plans, for a new cantonment about to be established there on a large scale. As, however, my works below the Ghauts were yet in an unfinished state, I was allowed for the present to retain the superintendence of them; so that I had altogether enough upon my hands.

My plans having been approved, I set to work with all possible despatch, and in less than a year had completed barracks for two regiments of Europeans, five regiments of natives, and a proportion of artillery, besides hospitals and other requisites. At Bangalore I continued for about three years, making such additions to the buildings, that, before I left, it had grown into the first military station on the Madras establishment; while its climate, situation, and productions, contributed, with its extensive society, to render it by far the pleasantest and most agreeable residence in the peninsula. Since I left the country, it has increased both in size and beauty, and may now be considered one of the largest and finest cantonments in India. The reader will excuse me for indulging in a little garrulity on the subject of this my architectural offspring. I consider myself, in fact, a little Romulus. The country round Bangalore being favourable for military evolutions, it has been made the school for military tactics on a large scale, while, at the same time, it has become the focus of pleasure. Besides the general amusements of cricket, and other similar pastimes, which the mildness of the climate for the greater part of the year enables the officers and soldiers to enjoy in perfection, meetings are held annually, at which the best horses in India contest the prizes, and where the gay fair, if not already provided with partners for life at the Presidency, may be able to dance themselves into the good graces of the less fastidious beaux of the up-country. Those delightful things, *pic-nics*, were also common here. They were generally held a few miles from the cantonment, in some pleasant situation favourable for sporting. I lament, however, to state that gaming, that bane of society, would often intrude itself into these parties, to poison a pleasant and innocent recreation. I abhor gaming: all pleasure, all

happiness, fly before it. He that can thoroughly enjoy it cannot have a sound heart, and he that makes a profit and a trade of it must have a thoroughly bad one. A worthy friend of mine used to express his dislike to high play, by saying, "I cannot possibly like to lose my own money, and I feel no pleasure in winning that of another." I must, however, say of those who are addicted to gambling in India, that every thing connected with it is there conducted on the fairest and most gentlemanly principles of which the vice is capable. I never saw any thing like importunity to play where disinclination was decidedly expressed, or any attempt to allure inexperienced youth. A remarkable instance to the contrary occurred just before I left India; which, without mentioning the names of the parties, though creditable to both, I shall take the liberty of introducing here.

A person high in authority in the Island of Ceylon, whose example and practice in this respect, were quite at variance with his general conduct, lost on one occasion at play, in his own house, a large sum of money, amounting, I believe, to some thousands of pounds, to a young officer. The next morning he sent for the winner, and addressed him in these words: "Young man, I lost a considerable sum to you last night. I perceive that you are inexperienced in play, and this success may be your ruin. I will not pay you, therefore, unless you give me your word of honour that you will never play again for more than a certain sum." The conditions were complied with, and the young man received a draft for his money.

A melancholy instance of the effects of gaming occurred while I was at Bangalore. Two officers played together. The one was a man hitherto respected and esteemed, the other of rather equivocal character. On meeting the following morning to arrange the balance, the latter brought in the former his debtor to a very large amount: the former denied that he owed him a farthing. The demand was persisted in, with the offer to bring witnesses to the fact; but this only produced a reiteration of the denial, accompanied by gross personal

abuse, repeated in such a manner as to provoke the *soi-disant* creditor, who would gladly have avoided a personal encounter, to send a challenge. They met; and, what was strange in a person who had hitherto supported the character of a gentleman, when on the ground the party called out, but who was in this case virtually the challenger, loaded his reluctant antagonist with every abusive epithet calculated to rouse the feelings of man. In short, he seemed desirous of goading on his adversary to such a pitch that one or the other of them must fall. In this effort he succeeded. They fired six rounds, and at length he fell dead on the spot. Notwithstanding every prejudice that existed against the survivor, it was generally believed that in this instance he was in the right; and so thought the court by which he was acquitted. Admitting this opinion to be just, what stronger proof of the dreadful effect of gaming can be adduced! Here was a man of unsullied character driven, in a fit of desperation, to commit a dishonest action, and then to seal it with his blood, while he aimed at the life of another. Honour or life is not an uncommon sacrifice to this hellish vice; witness the number of black-legs, and their victims, the suicides. But to lose both together is, it must be confessed, even in the annals of gaming, an unusual catastrophe.

I always look back at the time I spent at Bangalore with pleasure. I built myself a handsome house; I had plenty of horses and servants; and I enjoyed most of the luxuries of the East, without degenerating into effeminacy. It had been better for me if I had laid by something for a rainy day; but I never had the knack of making the gold stick to my fingers. I mixed a good deal in society with the regiments in cantonments, particularly the 59th regiment, commanded by a most gentlemanly, pleasant man, Colonel Gibbs, who was afterwards killed, as a Major-General, in the unfortunate expedition of New-Orleans. In this corps there was an Irishman of the name of Dillon, who was the life of our society at Bangalore. Who that was ever in company with Jack Dillon could forget him? Although but low in

the regiment, Jack was no chicken; for he had seen something of the world, in which he had spent a tolerable fortune before he entered the army. Jack's was not the wit that delights some, is envied or feared by others, and comprehended by few; but his was that rich native humour that suits all palates, from the peasant to the king, and is painful to none. He had a charming voice, and sung sweetly; while a rich brogue enabled him to give his national ditties, of which he had no trifling stock, to perfection. I think I see him now before me, with his tall Falstaff figure, twisting that Proteus mouth of his into the falsetto of some fine-drawn melody, then expanding it into the arch-expression of some laughter-stirring, side-aching, burlesque, or giving scope to his full mellow tones in some joyous bacchanal.*

Even now, I have some dozen odds and ends of songs of his, in my head; and if ever I catch myself humming a tune or warbling a lay, it is sure to be one of Jack Dillon's. He was the best humoured fellow in existence, with no nonsensical pride about him; but ever ready to give you his song or his joke in return for your claret. In short he was the soul of our festive board. Even in his low spirits, (for Jack was a little subject to the blue devils,) there was something irresistibly comical. His dolefuls were any thing but contagious. There seemed to be, in such cases, a load of suppressed fun lurking in the sunken corners of his mouth, ready to burst forth at the first glimpse of sunshine, and which you always felt inclined to draw out by some attempt at fun of your own. A trick which Jack played us about this time I shall not easily forget. We were on a shooting party in the country; and having primed ourselves pretty well with *sangaree* at tiffin, it was proposed to play at "follow the leader." So up we got, Jack among the rest, whose portly corporation was cut out

* Not in honour of *Bachee*, as a brother soldier of mine used to think, when, after a smoking-bout he said he had been sacrificing to Bacchus.

for any thing but such a game. The consequence was, that he got into many an awkward scrape, much to our amusement and his annoyance. Jack's turn to be leader came at last, after he was nearly fagged to death; when, spying a dirty slimy horse-pond at a short distance, he made straight for it, and plunged over head and ears into the filthy fluid. Honour compelled us to follow his example, and we came forth as black as coals. Luckily for us, either his compassion so far surpassed his love of fun, or he was so digusted with the nauseous effluvia himself, that he led us without delay to a neighbouring tank, where we washed off the effects of our foul immersion. I recollect seeing Jack lying wounded on the field of Cornelis. "Oh Curnel, Curnel?" said he to Colonel Gibbs, as the regiment passed on, "is this the way you go and lave a poor wounded soul lying on his back like a toortle!" Whether this exclamation was intended to excite our pity or our laughter, I can't say; but this I know, that it produced the latter. In vindication of our humanity, however, I must add, that his wound was but a graze scratch on the head, and that he was more frightened than hurt. But here the scene must close. Poor Dillon, with many other fine fellows, not long afterwards fell a victim to the climate of Batavia. Many a breast will join with mine in heaving a sigh to the memory of poor Jack Dillon!

Upon the whole, the time I spent at Bangalore was the pleasantest part of my service in India. As there was a large force of native infantry stationed there, I had a good opportunity of observing the system pursued in that main branch of the service, on the fidelity of which depends the existence of our Eastern empire; and, I must say, I was not altogether satisfied with it. There was too evident a desire to copy the European regiments, in matters not really essential to the discipline of the native corps, but, at the same time, tending to produce discontent, and to diminish their attachment to the service. For instance, the frequent drills, parades, and roll-calls, though absolutely necessary to preserve the Europeans, whose habits were any thing

but temperate or quiescent, in any degree of order, were by no means so to the sober and domestic sepoy, who, fond of his ease, becomes discontented when harassed by unnecessary duty. I thought too, that the European officers carried themselves too high with the native officers, and did not encourage their visits, or seem to be so much pleased with their society as they ought to have been. The cavalry officers appeared to me to manage those matters better than those of the infantry. My building transactions with the natives gave me some insight into their character, and into the mode of dealing with each other. Wherever money was in question, I found it to be a system of fraud and extortion, of bribery and corruption, from top to bottom; and the only way to secure your own interests at all, is to set these noxious elements in opposition to each other, that is, in fact, to set thief to catch thief. I used to be a good deal amused with the manner in which my head-man (who I suppose was as great a rogue as any of them) treated any person with whom it was necessary that he should make a bargain for building materials, or the like. No matter how respectable the man might be in appearance, how valuable his time might be to him, or how far he might have come, he was sure to be kept waiting in the ante-room of the office for two or three days before his business was allowed to come on. Upon remonstrating with my functionary on the impropriety of keeping a respectable person dancing attendance so long, I received for answer, that it was necessary to lower him a peg or two; or, in other words, to take the pride out of him, before he could be in a fit state to be treated with. Whether my man did this to show his consequence, or to extract a bribe from the contractor, or whether the reason assigned was the true one, I cannot pretend to say; but I believe it was compounded of all three.

It may amuse the reader to be informed that among my mathematical instruments, I had an inverting telescope, which I used sometimes to let my servants look through, that I might enjoy their surprise at seeing the

world turned upside down, and, in particular, the astonishment they expressed, when they saw men and women walking on their heads, without their clothes falling down. It got about in the cantonment that the engineer *Saheb* had a telescope which could turn people upside down; without the latter part of the phenomenon being generally known. So I used sometimes to amuse myself by pointing my glass at the women as they passed my window; upon which they would run as fast as they could, holding their clothes down with both their hands.

Here, in the course of my professional duty, I witnessed an instance of natural eloquence which I cannot avoid repeating as the best sample of the figurative language of the East that ever I heard. On one occasion the workmen engaged in my buildings struck for an advance of wages. I proceeded to remonstrate with them, and, among other exhortations to bring them back to their duty, I asked whether I had not always regarded their interests as my own. "It is true," said one advancing from the crowd, "master has always been a father to us; yea, and more than a father; for he has been to us as a mother also. But the child must cry before the mother thinks of offering it the breast."

A melancholy accident happened in my department about this period, which distressed me a good deal. Owing to some tardiness on the part of the Paymaster at Arcot, I was not properly supplied with money for the work at that station. I sent therefore a considerable sum from Bangalore, under the charge of four *peons* belonging to my establishment. From some information obtained, these poor men were waylaid by a band of robbers and murdered. Besides the fear which I entertained of being made responsible for the money, I had to witness the distress, and to bear the reproaches, of the families of the sufferers, until I could find means to provide for their support. In my application to the Government to be remunerated for the loss, I filled, at least, a sheet of foolscap with arguments in favour of my claim. After my native writer, or clerk, had copied the same, I asked if he understood it. "Oh, yes," said

he; "money lost; please give." This condensation of my elaborate epistle almost cured me of long letter-writing.

Being present at a court-martial about this time, I was much amused with the evidence of a young Irish officer, who, when questioned whether he had not given the lie to a certain person, replied, "No; I only said, that either he or the Colonel had told a lie, and that I was sure it wasn't the Colonel."

CHAPTER XIX.

Dispute between Sir George Barlow and the Company's Officers. The Author is sent to Pondicherry among the Nonjurors.—Description of Pondicherry.—Habits of the French Inhabitants.—Author returns to Bangalore.—Adventures on the road.—Arrives at Arnee.—Tomb of Colonel Harvey Aston.—Anecdotes of him.—The Author is ordered to Madras to take command of the Engineer Department in the Expedition to the Isle of Bourbon.—Travels by Dawk.—Palanquin Bearers.—Arrives at the Presidency.

Towards the latter part of my residence at Bangalore the dispute between Sir George Barlow and the officers of the army (which some are pleased to call a mutiny) occurred. Having been a rebel myself, I could say a good deal on this business, but that I think it a subject best buried in oblivion. That there were faults on both sides is certain; but on which side the faults preponderated it is not for me to say. The presentation of Sir George's famous test, in imitation of that of Cromwell to his army, which I, among others, refused to sign, was the cause of my being sent to Pondicherry, where about 300 refractory officers were assembled. This gave me an opportunity of seeing the former capital of the French possessions in the Peninsula. Al-

though the fortifications, which had been strong and extensive, had been razed after its capture by the British, and although it had lost all its political importance, still Pondicherry was a very pretty place. Unlike Madras in this respect, the Black and the White Town were united within the same walls. The whole was regularly laid out; but the part next the sea, which was inhabited by the French themselves, and which contained all the edifices belonging to the Government, was extremely well built, and resembled an European town more than any I had seen in India. The houses were constructed much on the same principle as those in France, and were not so well adapted to the climate as those of the English, though many of them were handsome and commodious edifices. There were still many French families residing there under the protection of the British Government, from which most of them received pensions. These were chiefly of the old nobility, who declined returning to their native country after the Revolution. In their intercourse with India the French went somewhat on the principle of colonization, while our policy is quite adverse to it. Thus Pondicherry, at the time I mention, formed a little distinct community, composed of persons of all ages, of which the young and the gay formed, of course, no small portion: so that with the mixture of some English families which could afford to entertain, Pondicherry was an extremely pleasant place, and for this reason much resorted to by the military from the neighbouring stations, who often preferred it to the Presidency; for here they needed neither two epaulets, a staff coat, nor a letter of recommendation, but merely the manners and conduct of a gentleman, to be admitted, with the customary introduction, into an agreeable society, conducted on cheap and easy terms.

The habits of the French are more suited to the climate than those of the English, and accordingly they appear to enjoy their health better. Many of the families have been settled here from the first formation of the factory, and they appear not to have degenerated

I was myself in the house with five generations, the youngest member of which was a young lady of seventeen. I did not see the great-great-grand dame, for she was bed-ridden, but I was positively assured that she was alive in the house. The young lady was married not long afterwards; but whether her venerable ancestor lived to see a *great-great-great*-grandchild, I did not hear.

I was here particularly struck with the difference in the conduct of the French towards the natives, from that of the English; the former being condescending and kind, while the latter are generally imperious and haughty. Whether this arises from their helpless and dependent condition, or whether it proceeds from the natural character of the French, I cannot pretend to decide; but probably it may originate partly in one and partly in the other of these causes. Although a third part of a century had elapsed since Pondicherry ceased to have any political importance, and though its European inhabitants were reduced to the situation of mere dependents on the bounty of a foreign state, still a large native population, without any very obvious means of livelihood, whether by manufactures or otherwise, clung to its dismantled walls, as if loath to desert the descendants of those whom their fathers had served. This attachment, as well as that which appeared to exist between master and man in their households, was a pleasing sight, and bore testimony to the amiableness of the French character.

Having spent about two months at Pondicherry, as pleasantly as the circumstances under which we found ourselves there would admit, I retraced my steps towards Bangalore, in company with another officer. Before we had proceeded many marches from Pondicherry we were overtaken by the rain, which came on suddenly during the night. On attempting to resume our march in the morning, we found, about half a mile in our front, a river which was rendered impassable by the rain. We were, therefore, compelled to come to a halt, and, to add to our comfort, we found that we were on a

small island about two miles in length, and one in breadth, where we were forced to remain for three days till the river subsided. During this time we killed sufficient game to supply ourselves with meat, and this, with the addition of a little biscuit which we carried with us, served us tolerably; but such of our followers as were forbidden by their religion to eat any thing killed by others than persons of their own cast, were wholly destitute of provisions, as we relied upon the villages where we halted for our daily supplies. Our horses and cattle, too, were without their usual allowance of grain.

Having resumed our march, I stopped after a few days at the fort of Arnee, which was formerly a place of some strength, and where a large garrison used to be maintained. But, the works having been blown up by order of the government, it is no longer a station for troops, though containing large and commodious barracks. Here I saw a handsome tomb, erected to the memory of Colonel Harvey Aston, who fell in a duel with the Major of his regiment. He had seen a good deal of the world before he came out to India, had been a great fox-hunter, a patron of the fancy, and a leading member in the sporting circles. He had many good points about him; was generous and brave; but he had a most inveterate disposition to quizzing, which involved him in many personal encounters, whereby he obtained the reputation of a professed duellist. He used to tell a story of one of his affairs, which, though not at all creditable to himself, was the best satire on the practice of duelling that can well be imagined. "I was in the theatre one night," said he, "and, seeing a fellow eating apples in the box where there were some ladies, I took the liberty of poking one into his throat with my finger. The man struck me. I knocked him down, and gave him a sound drubbing (for the Colonel was a famous bruiser). He called me out. I shot him through the arm; and the fool called that *satisfaction*." One of the few instances in which he was known to have been right, was on the occasion which proved fatal to him. On receiving his antagonist's shot, which took effect in his

body, he staggered a few paces; then, recovering himself, he presented his pistol deliberately at his opponent, and said, "I could kill him," (for he was a capital shot;) "but the last act of my life shall not be an act of revenge!" Words sufficient to redeem a life of error!

On arriving at Bangalore I resumed my duties, but did not long remain there, being ordered down to the Presidency, to fill the situation of commanding engineer on the expedition to the Island of Bourbon. As no time was to be lost in making my arrangements, I set off by dawk, that is, with relays of palanquin-bearers, and reached Madras in two days. In this manner you may travel from one end of India to the other at the rate of five miles an hour, without experiencing any fatigue, except from being mostly in a recumbent posture. The bearers generally change every twenty miles; but, should you be going only a distance of forty miles or so, one set of bearers, twelve in number, with a man holding the flambeau, will carry you that distance in one night, during which you may sleep as snugly as if you were in your own bed. The palanquin-bearers used on the Madras side of India are bred in the northern Circars, that tract of country extending from Ganjam to Vizagapatam. They are a fine race of people, with handsome features and muscular frames. Among the English the set of bearers for ordinary purposes is nine. A native is content with six, and is carried just as well; and so would a Frenchman be, I dare say; but John Bull must do the grand wherever he goes. The post throughout India is also conveyed by footmen, who travel nearly six miles an hour.

On my arrival at Madras I found the troops intended for the expedition to Bourbon all encamped on the esplanade in readiness to embark, so that I had little time left me for preparation.

CHAPTER XX.

The Author sails with the expedition to Bourbon.—Hardships undergone by the Native Troops on board Ship.—Their prejudices with regard to Cooking.—Country Ships.—Lascars.—Arrival at the Island of Rodriguez.—Description of the Island.—Coral Reefs.—Colonel Keating.—Author embarks in the Boadicea.—Commodore Rowley.—Captain Willoughby.—Joined by the rest of the Squadron.

On the 8th of May, the expedition, consisting of two companies of artillery, the flank companies of his Majesty's 12th and 33d regiments, his Majesty's 69th and 86th regiments, with a battalion of the 6th and another of the 12th native infantry, making a total of about 1700 Europeans and 1800 natives, being embarked in fourteen transports, set sail from Madras roads, under convoy of his Majesty's ships Diomede, Doris, and Ceylon.

This was the first time for many years that any considerable body of Madras sepoys had been embarked for foreign service; the alacrity with which they volunteered was therefore highly creditable to themselves, and a strong proof of their attachment to the service, and of their confidence in the British government; for, besides being put to the pain of a separation from their families, they in general undergo great privations while on board ship. From the impossibility of giving them a separate place to cook in, the higher castes of Hindoos are obliged to live altogether upon dried provisions, while at the same time, from the privacy required in their ablutions, they are debarred from the usual habits of cleanliness, so essential to their health and comfort.

I was stationed with my department on board one of

the transports, a Bombay country ship of about 900 tons. The merchantmen from that port are generally very fine vessels, being mostly employed in the China trade. They are built of teak at Bombay, where there is an excellent building yard kept by a Parsee, who has recently added some fine ships to the British navy. The country traders are manned entirely by lascars, except a few fellows with hats, calling themselves Portuguese, whose business it is to steer the ship, under the appellation of sea-cunnies. The officers are all English, and a pretty time they have of it with such crews. I was surprised, however, to see how well they got on, considering that they have no hold whatever on their ship's companies beyond the natural ascendancy of Europeans over Asiatics. The lascars are excellent sailors, as long as they are not exposed either to cold or rain. But when either of these comes on, one European is worth a dozen of them. They are very active, dexterous, and handy, and climb the rigging like monkeys; but, after all, the vessels are obliged to be manned with twice the number of hands that would be necessary if they were Europeans.

We were about thirty officers on board, and nearly a whole battalion of sepoys. We did not lay in any stock; but the captain was allowed so much a head for our board; and a very good table he kept. In fact these country skippers live like fighting-cocks; and some of them amass fortunes in the trade.

We made little or no progress during the first ten days, when a breeze springing up carried us across the line, on the 26th of May, in longitude 92°.

On the 7th of June we fell in with the trade-wind, which continued without intermission till our arrival at the island of Rodriguez, the spot fixed upon for the rendezvous, where we anchored on the 20th of June. On entering the road-stead the whole fleet crossed the reef, instead of going through the passage, which was intricate; two or three of the largest ships in consequence struck, but without receiving any injury.

Our passage from Madras was more favourable than

could have been expected at the time of the year; and the troops, though much crowded, were very healthy. The sepoys, to be sure, though not suffering from any actual complaint, looked rather dingy; for they could neither be persuaded to take proper exercise, nor, though naturally cleanly people, to exert themselves in the least to bathe or wash. Had, therefore, the voyage been of any length, they must have suffered severely from these causes. On the whole, however, they got on as well as could have been expected, and bore their hardships, if not with cheerfulness, at least with resignation.

The island of Rodriguez is high, and can be seen from a considerable distance. It has little to recommend it, except as being a good watering-place, in which respect it has answered well for our squadron blockading the Mauritius, both for the quantity and purity of its water, and for its position with regard to the Isle of France, from which it lies about sixty leagues to windward. When we were there it was cultivated only in a few spots by three French settlers and their families, who were allowed to remain unmolested. The island may, however, be turned to better account, for the soil is not bad, and produces abundance of small timber, and several kinds of fruits and vegetables spontaneously. Among these must be mentioned particularly, the cabbage-tree, a species of the cocoa-nut tree, the head of which very much resembles a cabbage in shape and taste. The island had only lately been garrisoned by troops from India, who, not having had time to cultivate the soil, were then chiefly subsisted on salt provisions, with some scanty supplies of fresh meat from Madagascar or the Cape. They had, however, the advantage of excellent fish caught on the coral-reefs.

These reefs, which surround most of the islands in this vicinity, are among the most curious productions of nature. They are said to be formed by a kind of worm, but in what manner, or by what process, I never could discover. They extend sometimes for nearly a mile into the sea,

and are scarcely ever uncovered, being seldom within less than a foot or two of the surface of the water. They lie perfectly horizontal, and have their sides so perpendicular, that vessels may sail close to them without danger. What a time must it not have taken for insects to form such a mass! In coral rocks I had pictured to myself large clusters of that beautiful semi-transparent substance which we see pendant from babies' necks, in the shape of whistles and rattles; and, as I had already anticipated in imagination the stores I should lay in for my juvenile friends, my surprise and disappointment were not small when I first beheld the thing itself, which is nothing more nor less than a dirty brown, hard, porous stone.

We found stationed here two companies of his Majesty's 56th regiment, two companies of the 2d Bombay native infantry, and 30th artillery, the same troops that were employed in the gallant and successful attack on St. Paul's, in the island of Bourbon, under the command of Commodore Rowley and Colonel Keating. The latter officer, who was to command our expedition, was absent on a cruize with the Commodore; but, a frigate having been dispatched from India to apprize them of our approach, they returned in a few days on board his Majesty's ship Boadicea.

From this time till the day of our sailing we were occupied in making the necessary arrangements. The force, which, with the addition of the marines of the squadron, and such seamen as could be spared, amounted to about 4000 men, was told off into four divisions or brigades; so that it cut a good figure on paper.

The ships of war which convoyed us from Madras having returned to their station, on the 3d of July the fleet got under weigh, convoyed by his Majesty's ships Boadicea and Nereide; the latter frigate, from the blockading squadron, having joined us the day before.

Previously to sailing, part of the troops were moved into the frigates, as it was intended to embark as many of the expedition as possible in the men-of-war, and to place the remainder in the fastest-sailing transports.

I accompanied Colonel Keating on board the Boadicea. This was the first time I ever sailed in a man-of-war. The Boadicea was a fine old English frigate of the first class, with a manly, gallant crew, and commanded by a man who, whether we consider him as a member of society or an officer, merited the highest praise, being beloved and respected by all who were associated or served with him. He had the happy art, which few possess, of keeping tight the reins of authority, without relaxing the bonds of affection. Such was Captain, now Admiral Sir Josias Rowley.

The Nereide was commanded by Captain Willoughby, a man who thrust his head into every gun, and ran it against every stone wall, he could find from Cape Comorin to Moscow. When I knew him, his face was cut and hacked in all directions; and since then, I understand, his Russian campaigns (for he was not content with sea-fighting) have not left him an eye to see out of. While on the Cape station, whether in command of the Otter sloop, of the dirty little 12-pounder frigate, the Nereide, he was the terror of both the Isles of France and Bourbon, on which he used frequently to land, more, I believe, by way of frolick than any thing else.

About noon on the 6th, we fell in with his Majesty's ships Sirius, Magicienne, and Iphigenia, which had been directed to meet us about sixty miles to windward of the Island of Bourbon. Till evening we lay to, for the purpose of removing the troops from the transports; and, having made sail at sun-set, came in sight of the island about three o'clock the next morning.

The following is a brief outline of the plan of attack. It was judiciously resolved to attack St. Denis, the capital of the island, and having secured which, there could be no doubt of the fall of all the subordinate places. In conformity with this intention, the chief part of the force, under the personal command of Colonel Keating, was to be landed about five miles to the eastward of the town. The troops composing this division were embarked on board the Boadicea, Nereide, Magicienne,

and Iphigenia frigates; some few of the native troops remaining in the transports.

The remainder of the force, under Colonel Fraser of the 86th, was to land at a place called Grand Chaloupe, about six miles to the westward of St. Denis; and, in consequence of the difficulties of the road, they were to commence their debarkation about two hours before the other part of the force. The Sirius and two of the best sailing transports contained the troops for this attack.

CHAPTER XXI.

Landing at the Island of Bourbon —Loss of lives in the surf.—Action of the 86th Regiment with the Enemy.—Defences of St. Denis, the Capital.—Island surrendered.

Some of the ships being a great distance astern, the Commodore lay to at day-break, and continued so during a considerable part of the day, in order to allow the Sirius, and the two transports with her, to gain their anchorage. This she effected about twelve or one o'clock, when the remainder of the fleet bore up, and anchored a little to the eastward of the river *Des Pluies*. About two P. M. the troops composing the principal attack began to disembark; but, unfortunately, there was at the time a very high surf running, which rendered the landing extremely dangerous. Captain Willoughby led the debarkation in a small schooner, which he immediately drove ashore. This example was followed by many of the ships' boats; so that about 150 men were landed in a short time; but this was not effected without the loss of some lives, and the entire destruction of such boats as attempted it. The situation of the small band now on shore was peculiarly distressing; for nearly half the men had lost their arms, and scarcely a cartridge re-

mained dry. To those who were still on board the ships, it was a melancholy and vexatious sight to witness the distressing state of their comrades, without being able to afford them succour. Fortunately the weakness or timidity of the enemy prevented them taking advantage of their situation. Several small parties, however, approached, and commenced a straggling fire on our troops; but the steady countenance of this small band, and the activity of their flanking parties soon caused the enemy to retire.

About four P. M. the Commodore seeing the precarious state of affairs, made the signal for one of the transports to run ashore, which was promptly obeyed. It was supposed that under her lee the boats might land the troops with safety; but it did not appear to answer that end. Many of the boats, however, succeeded in reaching the shore towards sun-set, when the surf had a little subsided; so that by dark the troops ashore mustered about 300. This small body, in their crippled state, not being thought sufficiently strong to attempt an attack on the town, were directed to take possession of the post of St. Mary's about three miles to the eastward, which they effected during the night with a trifling loss.

In the course of the night, most of the ships having troops on board dropped down towards Grand Chaloupe, where Colonel Keating now determined to land the remainder of the army, and to reinforce the attack on the western side of the town, which appeared to have made some progress. Towards morning the party at St. Mary's was augmented by some more men from the Boadicea, and thus strengthened, they were directed to co-operate in the attack.

It is now time to say something of the western attack. That part of Colonel Fraser's brigade on board the Sirius, consisting of the 86th regiment and two companies of the 6th native infantry, commenced their debarkation about one o'clock, without waiting for the transports with the other troops. Having effected their landing with ease, and without opposition from the enemy, about two o'clock they commenced their march for St. Denis,

by the high road leading from thence to St. Paul's. In the first part of the march they had to ascend a steep hill, on the summit of which was posted a small party of the enemy, who, after discharging their pieces, retired. Colonel Fraser met with little or no opposition during the remainder of the march, which lay over a mountainous country; and about five P. M. his column reached the brink of the hill which overlooks the town of St. Denis, and is distant from it about a mile and a half. Here he thought it advisable to take post for the night, as the other division had not succeeded in landing, reserving till morning the attack of the posts which he had been directed to assault.

The principal post was a strong redoubt, or rather small fort, situated on an eminence about three quarters of a mile from the town, near the road leading from St. Paul's. There were also two batteries on the beach to the northward of the redoubt, intended for the defence of the bay. Between these posts and the town runs the river St. Denis, on each bank of which, at a short distance, there is a high rocky precipice, following the course of the river till its junction with the mountains. In this consists the chief defence of the town on the western side. On the south it is covered by the side of the mountain, and its eastern face is open to the plain, but protected by redoubts at regular distances. At daybreak on the 8th, Colonel Fraser began to descend the hill, during which the troops were galled by the guns of the redoubt, as well as by some field-pieces advanced from the town. When he had reached the plain, he found the enemy, to about the number of 300, all regulars, posted with their right to the redoubt, and their left thrown back to the river. He immediately attacked, and forcing their position at the point of the bayonet, took possession of the redoubt, which they had abandoned at the same time. He then sent parties to spike the guns of the batteries on the beach, agreeably to his instructions, which service was executed without opposition. Colonel Fraser, having established himself in the redoubt, and placed the 86th regiment under cover of

the eminence on which it was situated, sent the two companies of the 6th native infantry up the hill to cover his rear in case of any movement of the enemy from St. Paul's. The enemy kept up a smart fire on Colonel Fraser's position from some field-pieces in the town, by which they wounded several of our men, and killed one of their own officers who had been taken prisoner in the attack. This fire was answered by two guns taken in the redoubt, which were not spiked in such a manner but that they were soon rendered serviceable by a party of artillery attached to Colonel Fraser's column. About 8 A. M. Colonel Drummond, with a part of his brigade, consisting of 200 marines and 400 of the 12th native infantry, landed at Grand Chaloupe, and joined Colonel Fraser about one P. M. I came up with this party, having slept on board the Nereide frigate, which dropped down in the night to Grand Chaloupe. On our march towards St. Denis we met about 200 of the enemy, who had marched from St. Paul's by a path through the mountains, with the intention of reaching the capital; but, after a little skirmishing, they retired. Shortly after this, the flank battalion arrived, and other reinforcements continued to descend the hill till about 4 P. M.; when the enemy, perceiving that we were making dispositions to attack the town, sent out a flag of truce to propose a cessation of arms.

Colonel Keating not being yet arrived, Colonel Fraser sent me into the town with the officer bearing the flag of truce, to inform the Commandant that, not being empowered to treat, he could not, in the absence of the commanding officer, take upon himself to agree to a suspension of hostilities, unless he were put in possession of some of the posts on the opposite side of the river. But no sooner had I reached the Commandant's, having previously gone through the operation of being blindfolded on passing the defences, than I met Colonel Keating in the act of entering the house, having come at full gallop from Grand Chaloupe, and made his way, by some means or other, through the enemy's out-posts into the town.

He began, in his usual *brusque* manner, by informing the Commandant, in broken French, that he was the identical Colonel Keating, commanding the expedition; and that he had, contrary to the ordinary practice of war, come in person, in order that he might preserve the town and garrison; for a column, with which he had not the power of communicating, was then advancing from St. Mary's, with orders to attack the town without delay; and that the only way to prevent the consequences was to surrender at discretion. The French Governor, a mild, quiet kind of man, seemed not to understand this summary way of going to work. "*Mais, Monsieur le Colonel*," said he, "*nous avons des bonnes postes.*" "Posts, or not posts," says Colonel Keating, "if you don't surrender this minute, I can't answer for your life." The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders, repeated his observations, and attempted to put on a determined air; but this would not do. "There's a devil of a fellow commanding that column from St. Mary's," added the Colonel, "and your old friend Willoughby is there also." At the sound of the latter name the Governor started. A distant shot was now heard. "There they are, close to your gates," says Colonel Keating: you had better make haste; you shall have the honours of war, and private property shall be respected; but nothing more." In short, the poor Governor was fairly bullied out of his island. Not but what there were troops enough to take half a dozen such islands.

At noon on the following day the 86th regiment took possession of the town; and the garrison marched out, with the honours of war. The regular troops, which, on the whole island, did not amount to above 500 men, were by the terms of capitulation, to be prisoners of war, but the remainder of the force, which consisted of *garde nationale*, were, after being disarmed, allowed to return to their homes.

Our loss amounted in killed and wounded to about 90 men. The only officer killed was Lieutenant Monro, of the 86th regiment. The enemy, it was supposed, did not suffer so much, though their loss in officers was great-

er. The brunt of the business, as may be seen, fell on the 86th regiment, a weak corps, not amounting to above 400 men, which carried the enemy's position, flanked as it was by a redoubt, and defended by artillery, with the greatest gallantry, although obstinately disputed by a body of regulars, who, in this instance, behaved very well.

CHAPTER XXII.

Description of the Island of Bourbon.—The Author makes a Tour of the Island.—Volcano.—Pays brulé.—Creoles.—Slaves.—Attack of the Isle de la Passe near the Isle of France.—The French Squadron enters Port South East.—Attacked by four English Frigates.—All lost or taken.—The French recover the Isle de la Passe.—Judicious conduct of Commodore Rowley.—Capture of the Africaine.—Recovered by the Boadicea.—French rejoice at the death of Captain Corbet.—Capture of the Ceylon Frigate.—Retaken, together with her antagonist the Venus, by Commodore Rowley.—Exertions of the Navy in refitting the Ships.—Admiral Bertie arrives from the Cape in the Nisus.—The Squadron sails for the Isle of France.—The Author embarks on board the Boadicea.—Is employed in reconnoitring the Coast. French gasconade.—The Expedition arrives from India.—Corps composing it.

The Island of Bourbon is about 100 miles in circumference, and nearly round. Its model would resemble a cross-bun; for it is, in fact, one great mountain, rising gradually from the sea, and intersected by two immense ravines or chasms crossing each other at right angles. On the western side is a volcano, which is in a constant state of ignition, but not subject to very frequent eruptions. The last previously to our arrival took place, I believe, in 1802. The top of the island is seldom seen, being, from its great height, generally enveloped in clouds. Coffee is grown here in great abundance and of excellent quality. The island also produces some

kinds of spices, and sufficient sugar for its own consumption. The chief grain grown is maize, or Indian corn, on which the planters feed their slaves, pigs, and poultry, of which two latter classes of animals the meat consumed on the island mostly consists, as there are very few sheep or black cattle. Almost every degree of climate may be experienced here, by varying your height from the sea; consequently the richer inhabitants generally have houses at some distance up the mountain, as well as in the towns and plantations near the coast. The capital, St. Denis, is a neat well built town of wood; but, as it lies on the windward side of the island, its roadstead is not safe. The town of St. Paul's has the advantage in this respect; and, from lying to leeward, its roadstead, except for a short period of the year, is equivalent to a port. These are the only two towns of any size; but there are several pretty villages on the sea-coast all round the island. The interior is generally covered with timber, and except in a few spots, uncultivated. Now, however, that there is a greater demand for the staple produce of the colony, I have no doubt that a considerable part has been cleared, and planted with coffee.

While here I made a tour of the island with Colonel Keating, and we were hospitably entertained by the principal planters, many of whom are of the old regime. These expressed themselves delighted to see us, for we had not only turned out that revolutionary *canaille*, as they called the Buonapartists, with whom they lived in a state of enmity, but had opened to them a market for their produce. I apprehend, however, notwithstanding all their *Bourbon* zeal, that the latter was the more weighty consideration of the two. We were much pleased with our tour; for the island abounded in beautiful and picturesque scenery. There is no road whatever across the interior. The only communication is by the sea-coast, from which the road seldom deviates to any distance. Owing to the number of ravines, water-courses, and irregularities in the side of the mountain, the road is very hilly, and generally paved;

and, as the horses are never shod, it is impossible to go at any pace.

The island is accessible in many spots during the greater part of the year; but still, from the nature of its surface, it is capable of being defended with a small force, if judiciously applied. In this respect St. Denis is not well chosen as the seat of Government; for neither that nor St. Paul's is capable of defence. We passed over what the French called the *Pays brulé*—a tract of lava, extending about eight miles along the coast under the volcano. We particularly noticed the course which the lava took in the last eruption. The trees of a large wood which it passed through were still standing, and the wind, as it whistled through their hollow decayed trunks, resembled the sound of many different-toned flutes, or of a large Æolion harp. I was much struck with the manner in which the lava had rushed into the sea, forming, as it cooled, small promontories of all shapes. I would have made any sacrifice to have seen the two elements meeting.

The Creole women of Bourbon are in general very beautiful, and their manners are fascinating. Not so the men, who partake a good deal of the Asiatic, both in character and appearance. Possibly the characteristics of timidity and finesse, and the softness of feature and muscle, so unbecoming in the man, may prove the sources of attraction in the female. There is a considerable slave population, originally supplied from Madagascar, but latterly supported chiefly by breeding, as our blockading squadron has of late prevented their importation. They are not by any means so fine a race as the Caffres of the western coast of Africa. They seem to be well treated, and appear happy, generally passing their leisure hours in dancing and singing; and I should think that they are not worked half so hard as the *free* English labourer. But this is no proof that slavery is not a curse. On the contrary, I cannot conceive a stronger argument against the vile practice, than that it reduces its victims so low in the scale of beings as to be contented and happy under so degrading a state of

existence. I dare say it might be proved that, in many cases, a horse was a happier creature than a man; but are we for this reason to reduce man to the level of a beast? The children of the slaves, as in the West Indies, follow the state of their mothers, whatever the father may be; so that it is not uncommon to see a very pretty girl, nearly as fair as an European, called a *negresse,* while you will sometimes encounter a free woolly-headed black, the colour of your hat, who, if you ask him who his master is, will reply, "*Moi, je suis blanc comme vous.*"

As soon as the island was captured, Mr. Farquhar, who had formerly been Governor of Malacca, was installed as Governor, having accompanied the expedition for that purpose by the authority of the Governor-General of India.

Shortly after this, more effectually to blockade the Isle of France, it was resolved to attack a small island in the mouth of Port South-east, called the *Isle de la Passe.*

With this view, a small expedition was fitted out at the Isle of Bourbon, and forwarded on board the Nereide to join Captain Pym, who with his own frigate, the Sirius, Magicienne, and Iphigenia, had returned to resume the blockade of the Isle of France. The attack succeeded completely; and Captain Pym returned with the above-mentioned frigates to cruize off Port Louis, leaving Captain Willoughby with the Nereide anchored near the Isle de la Passe. While there, the French frigates Bellone and Minerve, and Victor sloop with two Indiamen which they had captured, appeared off the island; but, observing the British frigates off Port Louis, they steered for Port South-east. Not suspecting the state of things in this quarter, and being deceived by false signals made by Captain Willoughby, they stood straight into the harbour, and did not discover their mistake till the leading vessels were abreast of the island, from which and the Nereide a fire was opened on them that caused the Victor immediately to strike her colours, and come to an anchor. But the other vessels,

excepting the Windham Indiaman, which was somewhat astern, having a leading wind, pushed on, and got safe into the harbour: the Bellone, at the same time, causing the Victor as she passed to cut her cable and follow. The Windham was shortly afterwards picked up by our squadron, and sent to St. Paul's.

The French vessels were now all snug in port, and the Isle de la Passe was in our possession, so that they could not escape. Considering, therefore, that there was an expedition fitting out in India for the attack of the Isle of France, on the success of which all would fall together, I think I am fully justified in asserting, that the attack made by Captain Pym on the French ships in this harbour, and which ended in the loss of four British frigates, and the re-capture of the Isle de la Passe, was wanton and unnecessary; and that of whatever benefit its success might have been to individuals, it could not possibly have been productive of any advantage to the service. But the consequences of the failure did not end here; for it immediately gave the French the command in those seas; and if they did not derive all the benefit they might have done from their temporary ascendancy, it is mainly to be attributed to the judicious and prudent conduct of Commodore Rowley, who, out of a fine squadron, had now only his own ship and the Otter sloop to support the British flag. The French immediately took the sea with three frigates and a corvette; for which, as the Commodore was no match, he was compelled, after various manœuvres, to bring up at St. Paul's, while he was endeavouring to fit out one of the transports as a man of war. In this state, while two French frigates were cruising in sight of the Isle of Bourbon, the Africaine frigate, Captain Corbet, made her appearance off St. Denis, having touched at Rodriguez, where she learnt the state of affairs. Perceiving the French ships in the offing, and hearing that the Boadicea was at St. Paul's, Captain Corbet sent over-land to the Commodore to inform him of his arrival, and that if he would make sail immediately, they could meet and attack the enemy. The Commodore lost no time in getting

under weigh in company with the Otter. The French ships were then about eight miles from the island; but as Captain Corbet was to windward he soon closed with them. Not so the Boadicea, which had to work up to windward. I rode out to the nearest point of land to the vessels, in order to view the action, which I thought would soon take place near the island; but night came on, and there was little wind to bring up the Boadicea. When I saw them last, Captain Corbet appeared to be manœuvering very judiciously, luffing up every now and then to give the enemy a broadside, which he was enabled to do from having the advantage in sailing, but not venturing to bring them to action while the Boadicea was about six miles to leeward. It appears, however, that he did not long adhere to these cautious tactics; for, by some means or other, about two o'clock in the morning, the Africaine found herself between the French ships just as the wind fell calm, the Boadicea being still four or five miles to leeward. The result is known. Captain Corbet was killed and the Africaine taken. In the morning the breeze that brought up the Boadicea carried off the French frigates, which abandoned their prize to Commodore Rowley, by whom she was towed, dismasted, into St. Paul's. Captain Corbet was well known at the Isle of France, when he commanded the Nereide on that station, where he was as much dreaded by the authorities as his successor Captain Willoughby. So delighted were they to hear of his death, that an English officer, who was prisoner in the island, told me that he was dining with a large company of French at Port Louis, (by express permission,) when an officer came rushing into the room, calling out, in a vehement tone and manner, "*L'Africaine est prise, et Corbet est tué!*" At which the company rose spontaneously, and clapped their hands. A few days after the action the Ceylon frigate arrived off the Isle of France, having on board Lieutenant-General Abercrombie, who was appointed to command the expedition preparing against the Mauritius, together with the chief engineer, Colonel Caldwell. Not having heard of our disaster at

the Isle de la Passe, on reaching Port Louis, they were surprised to find none of our blockading squadron at their post, and still more so, when, peeping into the port they observed two of the enemy's ships get under weigh, and give chase to the Ceylon. Captain Gordon immediately bore up for the Island of Bourbon; but, observing that one of the enemy's vessels in chase considerably outsailed the other, he thought, by shortening sail after dark, so as to allow the headmost ship to come up, that he should be able to beat the enemy in detail. This was a bold manœuvre, considering that the Ceylon was of the smallest class of 18-pounder frigates; and the result proved it; for, after a smart action with the Venus frigate, in which both vessels were dismasted and unmanageable, Captain Gordon struck his colours to the Victor sloop, which had arrived and taken up a raking position under his stern. In the morning, the Boadicea, which had been attracted by the firing during the night, came out from St. Paul's and picked up the two opponents, which had drifted close under the island. The Victor sloop got off.

There were now three dismasted frigates at St. Paul's, with the better part of two crews: the commodore set to work to fit them for sea, by rigging them with jury-masts taken from the Indiamen and Otter, with such of their own as could be repaired. I think I never witnessed such indefatigable exertions as were made by the navy on this occasion. I could not have believed it possible that they could have stepped the new masts, rigged and got these ships ready for sea, in an open road-stead, and without any assistance from a dock-yard; much less that it could be effected in so short a time.

About the 10th of October, Admiral Bertie, in the Nisus, Captain Beaver, arrived from the Cape of Good Hope, and assumed the command of the squadron; which, on the 15th, sailed for the Isle of France, composed of the following ships, Africaine, Nisus, Boadicea, Ceylon, and Nereide (late Venus French frigate). The Africaine bore the flag of the Admiral, and in her Lieutenant-General Abercrombie also embarked.

On the 21st of October the squadron made the Isle of France, and much to their disappointment found no enemy to oppose them, the French ships showing no disposition to quit the port. The Ceylon accordingly returned to Bourbon, for the purpose of conveying the transports containing troops to Rodriguez, which was fixed upon as the general rendezvous for the expedition.

On the 23d the Africaine, having on board the Admiral and General, sailed for Rodriguez, the other ships being left under the command of Commodore Rowley, to continue the blockade. I remained on board the Boadicea, having been appointed, with the master of that ship, to the duty of reconnoitering the coast, for the purpose of fixing upon the proper point of debarkation. In order that we might approach the coast more effectually we had a schooner placed at our disposal, in which we used frequently to run the gauntlet of the enemy's batteries; but generally with a smart breeze, so that they could seldom get their shot to tell on us. In the day time we mostly employed ourselves in taking bearings and soundings, and at night we used to grope about the shore in a boat, frequently so close as to be hailed by the sentries; and once we actually landed at the spot where the descent was afterwards effected, without being observed. We found the strength of the Island, which consisted in the difficulty of landing, to be overrated; for at that time of the year the sea was so smooth on the lee-side that even on the reefs there was but little surf. My head-quarters were at this time on board the Boadicea, where I spent as pleasant a time as the hardships of the service in which I was engaged would permit.

About this time the boats of the Hesper succeeded in capturing a schooner from France which was trying to reach the Island. She had a Lieutenant and Aspirant of the French navy on board, who behaved gallantly, but were not well supported by the crew. They were both wounded. I was questioning a great stout fellow respecting the capture, when he said, in the usual rho-

domontade of his countrymen, "*S'ils étoient tous comme moi le batiment n'auroit pas été pris.*"

I heard afterwards that this very fellow was found crouching under the bowsprit of the schooner.

A similar specimen of the national character was evinced in one of our guides, a French soldier who had been taken on board the Venus. On questioning him relative to the force in the Island, he described some companies of grenadiers as "*des fiers coquins*;" adding at the same time, as a proof of his assertion, "*Moi j'étois grénadier moi.*" The fellow was about five feet nothing! but the fact is, the French grenadiers are chosen, not for their size, but for having distinguished themselves.

About the 22d of October, Admiral Drury, in the Russell 74, with six frigates, and the Hesper sloop, having under his convoy a fleet of transports containing the troops for the expedition, arrived at Rodriguez. Hearing there of our disaster at the Isle de la Passe, he immediately pushed on with the men of war for the Isle of France, in hopes of encountering the French squadron, which he naturally supposed to be there, and masters of the sea in that quarter. In this expectation he was disappointed; for, on the 25th he fell in with Admiral Bertie, who not only undeceived him on this point, but, to the Admiral's great chagrin, ordered him back to his station, having taken his frigates from him. Admiral Bertie then continued his course for Rodriguez, having detached the Cornelia frigate and Hesper sloop to reinforce the squadron off the Mauritius.

At Rodriguez the General employed himself in making the necessary arrangements for the attack, while he awaited the arrival of the transports from Bengal. This fleet did not make its appearance until the 26th of November, at which time General Abercrombie, despairing of its arrival in time, had begun to deliberate whether he should, or should not, proceed to the attack of the Island with the troops he then had at his command. The force now assembled amounted to about 10,000 men, chiefly Europeans, which, with seamen

and marines from the squadron, could be augmented to about 12,000. The European regiments employed were, I believe, his Majesty's 12th, 22d, 59th, 69th, and 84th regiments, with two companies of the 56th regiment, flank companies of the 33d, some dismounted dragoons, and a due proportion of the East India Company's artillery. What the native corps were I do not recollect; but I think there were two battalions from Bengal, and two from Madras, with a body of pioneers, and a proportion of the Engineer department under Colonel Caldwell, who had accompanied the General from the time he left Madras. Besides the above force, two regiments of Europeans were expected from the Cape of Good Hope to join the expedition. General Warde was second in command. Who the brigadiers were, I do not now recollect.

With as little delay as possible the whole fleet set sail from Rodriguez, and on the 28th fell in with Commodore Rowley, who, with the chief part of the blockading squadron, had been directed to meet them about 60 miles to windward of the Isle of France. While the Commodore was absent, I removed on board the Nisus, in order that I might continue my reconnoissance.

During the greater part of the 28th the fleet lay to, in order not to approach within view from the Island before sunset, as well as to shift some of the troops from the transports to the blockading squadron. In the evening they made sail, and at sunrise on the following morning were within about ten miles of Round Island.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Spot fixed upon for the Debarkation.---Landing.---Progress of the Army towards Port-Louis.---Adventure of the Author.---Action near Port-Louis.---Night Alarm.---Ridiculous occurrence.---Island surrendered.

THE place fixed upon for the debarkation of the army was close to leeward of Cape Malheureux, which spot, as I have already said, as well as the passage leading to it, had been previously well reconnoitred and sounded. To this point the fleet stood in with a light breeze, the most favourable that could be imagined. To gain the anchorage, the ships had to pass between Gunner's Coin and the main, where no English vessel had ever before ventured, and which was never attempted, even by the French themselves, unless in the last extremity. The undertaking was altogether bold and striking; and the elements being propitious, the whole fleet came to an anchor about three quarters of a mile from the shore, without the smallest accident.

About twelve o'clock the debarkation of the troops commenced, under the direction of Captain Beaver, with an attempted regularity, ridiculous enough, considering that there was no enemy near to oppose our landing, and that the object, therefore, should have been to get ashore as fast as possible. Captain Beaver was the same officer who conducted the famous descent on Aboukir Bay, where he obtained, deservedly, great credit; but, in attempting to put the same system in practice here, he did not consider how different the two cases were; the one taking place on an open beach, with a powerful enemy to dispute the landing; the other through narrow passages between coral reefs, with no-

thing in the shape of an enemy to be seen for miles. The spot was found to exceed our most sanguine expectations, most of the troops having landed without even wetting their feet. About two o'clock, the chief part of the army being landed, we began our march towards Port Louis. The first part of the route lay along the beach, and we did not fall into any regular road till we reached Grande Bay, about four miles from the place where we landed, whence we took the high-road to the capital. This led through a wood, impenetrable on both sides; so that, having nothing to fear from an attack on our flanks, we pushed on as fast as possible, to gain the open country before the enemy could have time to throw any material obstacle in our way. This I was convinced beforehand was of great consequence, and I therefore felt the more annoyed at the unnecessary delay in the commencement of the debarkation. When the head of the column had got about half way through the wood, which was three or four miles in length, I was anxious, as having the command of the guides on the expedition, to see my way to the open country before dark. I pushed on, therefore, with half a dozen riflemen; but, just as we had reached the end of the wood, we came suddenly on a post of the enemy. The sentries immediately challenged, and discharged their pieces; whereupon my party took to their heels, and the guides sought shelter in the wood. As soon as I could, I halted the men, and advanced a little in search of the guides, who presently can running headlong down the road, making such a noise, that in the dusk the riflemen mistook them for the enemy, and gave them a volley, when within a few yards. They both fell at our feet, but were happily taken up unhurt, though dreadfully frightened.

Having made my report to General Warde, who commanded the advance, the column moved on, headed by the light company of the 12th regiment, which, charging the enemy with vigour, forced their position at the point of the bayonet. Our loss was trifling in this skirmish. One officer only was wounded; but the enemy

suffered more, as we afterwards ascertained. It was nearly dark before we reached the skirts of the wood; we could not, therefore, see what force we had opposed to us; but it was subsequently discovered to have been greater than we supposed at the time, though mostly composed of the *garde nationale*, or the militia of the Island.

On quitting the wood, the road branched off in two directions, both leading to Port Louis, that on the left by Pamplemousses church, the other by the powder-mills. The column was halted for a short time, while the General deliberated which road he should take. Having resolved on proceeding by the latter, as it would keep us nearer to the sea-coast, and so facilitate our supplies from the fleet, the column was again put in motion. About a mile further we discovered a well of water near a neighbouring habitation; and the General resolved on halting there for the night. Towards the latter part of the march, the troops had been much distressed from thirst, as they had exhausted their canteens early in the day, and there was no water to be found on the road. So great, therefore, was the crowd at the well, that it served more to tantalize than to satiate the thirst of so large a body. Add to this, the rope attached to the bucket having broken, the men could only obtain water in small quantities, by lowering their canteens into the well. Although the army had not marched this day above eight miles, the head of the column did not reach its ground till 8 P. M. The sun was extremely powerful, and the troops, from having been so long cooped up in ships, were less able to bear its effects. Some officers and men actually died of fatigue, joined to the extreme heat and want of water. Among these, a poor fat Captain of an Indiaman, who accompanied the troops more from curiosity than any thing else, met his fate from a *coup de soleil*.

At day-break the following morning the army was put in motion, and about 8 A. M. the head column reached the powder-mills without encountering any enemy. As this spot afforded every convenience in point of water

situation, &c. the General resolved to halt here for the day in order to refresh the troops. A strong position was, therefore, taken up for the army, which was drawn up in two lines, with its left to the powder-mills. This day's march was not above four miles; and we were still five or six miles distant from Port Louis.

About noon a party of the enemy, horse and foot, appeared for the purpose of reconnoitering our army. They attacked, and drove in our picquets, and advanced so as to fire into our lines. The riflemen of the 59th regiment, however, soon compelled them to retire. There were several men killed and wounded on both sides in this affair. General Decaen was present, and narrowly escaped, having had his horse wounded, and received a shot through the heel of his boot. During the day supplies arrived from the fleet; so that, with some cattle found at the powder-mills, the troops fared tolerably.

Soon after day-break of the 1st of December, the army resumed its march. We met with no obstacle, until we reached the river des Pamplemousses, where we found a body of the enemy, with some guns, posted to oppose our progress; to accomplish which the more effectually they had in part destroyed the bridge. As the enemy appeared to be in force at this place, it was thought advisable to bring up two field-pieces, a few shot from which soon compelled our opponents to retire. The column, accordingly, continued its march, the troops passing over the beams of the bridge which had not been removed, and the guns through the bed of the river in which there was but little water.

We proceeded about a mile further without any obstacle; but, on approaching Rivière Seche, we were a good deal annoyed by the enemy's sharp-shooters, the country being very favourable to that species of warfare. Our flankers, however, prevented their much impeding our progress. At this time fell the gallant Colonel Campbell, while advancing at the head of the column. As soon as we began to debouch from the enclosures near Riviere Seche, we found the enemy drawn up on the opposite bank, ready to dispute the passage.

The moment they perceived our troops, they began a heavy fire of grape and round shot on the column. It now became necessary to show the enemy a front; and, as the ground admitted of our extending to the right only, the column wheeled, and proceeded to take ground in that direction. This manœuvre was executed with promptitude, and tolerable regularity, considering that the troops were all the time exposed to a heavy fire of musketry and grape. The enemy, perceiving that part of our object was to turn their flank, pushed forward a body from their left to obstruct this manœuvre; but, being encountered by the flank battalion, they were quickly sent to the right about. As soon as three or four corps had formed into line, we advanced upon the enemy, who did not wait to be charged, but fled with precipitation, leaving us in possession of their guns, consisting of two field-pieces, and a howitzer.

Although in this affair the enemy displayed neither courage nor address, yet, to the small part of our force engaged, it was highly creditable. The flank corps and the 12th regiment received the particular thanks of the General; the latter, for the great steadiness with which they formed the line, when exposed to the close fire of the enemy.

Our loss was not so great as might have been expected. Colonel Campbell of the 33d, and Major O'Keefe of the 12th, were the only officers killed. Both were much regretted. Colonel Campbell had commanded the advance from the time we landed, and was always to be found at the head of the column, exposed on all occasions to the enemy's sharp-shooters, for whom, being mounted, he was a prominent mark. He fell a victim to his great zeal for the service, having been in vain solicited to dismount, or not to ride so forward.

In pursuit of the enemy our troops advanced very near the lines covering the town, from which they were smartly cannonaded. They were, therefore, drawn out of range of the guns; and the army took up a position in two lines, with its left on the Montagne Longue, on the summit of which a battalion was posted.

At the same time that the army marched from the powder-mills, Colonel M'Leod was detached with his brigade, for the purpose of taking the batteries and posts at Tortue and Tombeaux Bays, in order that a communication might be opened with the shipping. On reaching his destination, however, he found those posts already in possession of our seamen, the enemy having evacuated them the preceding day. He accordingly joined the army the same evening. In the course of the day most of the ships of war and some transports dropped down, and anchored in Tortue Bay; by which means the army was supplied with every thing necessary for its subsistence.

At night there was an alarm in camp, which had very nigh produced serious consequences. The soldiers, suddenly awakened from their sleep, were, in many instances, so unsteady as to fire off at random their pieces, which had, very imprudently, been left loaded; and, in consequence, several casualties occurred in the front line. Having contrived to squeeze myself, with some other officers, into a house, I lay asleep at the time in my cloak on the floor, dreaming, very naturally, of "Paul and Virginia," whose infant loves had sprung up and ripened in the very valley in which we were then lying, when I was suddenly awakened by a man falling headlong over me, bellowing out, "Charge bayonets!" accompanied by a brisk fire of musketry. I seized my sword which lay at my side, sprung up on my legs, and had nearly plunged my weapon into the body of the intruder before I had fairly gained my senses. I questioned him hastily as to the alarm, but could get no coherent answer. He had been awakened by the firing, I suppose, and from the veranda, where he had been asleep, probably dreaming at that moment of being closely engaged with the enemy, he jumped through the window, and lighted right upon me. The other officers being now awakened, each set off to find his post, if the night, which was pitch-dark, would permit him. For my part, hearing the balls whizzing about, and having no particular post to go to, I preferred remaining where I

was, till the alarm had subsided, by which time it was too late to seek further repose. The cause of the alarm could not be ascertained; but it could not have proceeded from the enemy, the picquets being all the time perfectly quiet.

On the following morning a flag of truce was sent by General Decaen to our camp, with an offer to capitulate; and the articles being adjusted during the day, on the 3d at noon, the grenadier companies of the army took possession of the lines.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Terms of Capitulation.—Arrival of Troops from the Cape.—Cruel scene on board the Prison Ships.—Description of the Island, and of Port Louis.—Inhabitants.—The Author sails for, and arrives at Madras.—Is appointed Extra Aid-de-Camp to Sir Samuel Auchmuty, on the Expedition to Java.—His feelings on being appointed to the Staff.—Treated with greater consideration in consequence.—His remarks thereon.—Court paid to Rank.—Anecdote on that subject.

Thus did this bugbear of an island fall into our hands, with a loss of only about 160 men killed and wounded, a mere trifle compared with what was expected from the supposed natural strength of the island, and the boasted talents and courage of the great General Decaen. Certainly the force employed was more than adequate to the undertaking, and the time of the attack well chosen; for at that season of the year the water on the lee side of the island is perfectly smooth, which renders the debarkation easy in places where, at any other time, it would be impracticable.

The terms of capitulation differed little from what are usually granted on such occasions, excepting (which is indeed a very material point) that the garrison, instead

of being prisoners of war, were to be sent to France at the expense of the British Government. This was certainly much more than General Decaen, from his slender means of defence, could possibly have anticipated. Of course, as it may be supposed, these terms were not much relished by the army: nor do I think that they were such as our country had a right to expect. On the other hand, it must be admitted that the fine season was far advanced, and the hurricanes might soon be expected, when our fleet would be compelled to put to sea, leaving the army to carry on its operations alone. To this, however, if provisions had been landed, they would have been fully equal, even though the place had not been open to a *coup de main*. But it was my opinion, and that of Colonel Caldwell, the chief engineer, who expressed the same to the Commander-in-chief, that, in half an hour after he chose to give the word to advance, the place would have been our own: and so, I believe, thought many others. The enemy had not above 3,000 men in garrison, a number quite insufficient to man their lines, even on one side of the town; while it would have been easy, through the means of the fleet, to have landed a body of troops on the opposite side, where it was, if any thing, more assailable. Of the above number of men in garrison, 900 might have been regulars, with about as many seamen, the rest *garde nationale.* We understood that they had not above 1,200 men opposed to us in the affair of the 1st, when the troops were commanded by a General Vandermasse.

On the day that the Island surrendered, his Majesty's ship Phœbe, with five transports, arrived from the Cape, having on board his Majesty's 72d and 87th regiments, with 100 artillery. These troops, although not in time to partake in the glory of the capture, (if glory it could be called,) served probably to intimidate the enemy into an ea rly surrender of the island.

Notwithstanding the terms they had obtained, some of the French pretended to be dissatisfied, and, on entering the town, I saw some groups of whiskered fellows *sacre*-ing and *diable*-ing, and exclaiming, "*J'aimerois mieux,*

mourir les armes á la main." Had things proceeded to extremities, these boasters would probably not have been the last to run away.

As soon as our guards had mounted at the gateway, Colonel Caldwell and I walked into the town. Shortly afterwards we heard some firing in the direction of the port; when, proceeding thither, we met two French naval officers running towards us, who informed us that the English on board the prison-ships had risen on their guards, and begged that we would go on board, and endeavour to restore order. We complied, and embarked in their boat. Having boarded the first prison-ship, instead of things being as they were represented, we found the gun-deck strewed with dead and dying English, others swimming about the vessel for their lives, and the remainder battened down in the orlop deck, almost in a state of suffocation. We were highly shocked and indignant at such a scene, and, on inquiring the cause, were told that the prisoners, seeing the British flag flying in the town, had risen, and disarmed the guard, upon whom they were proceeding to wreak their vengeance, when the French Commodore sent a party of marines on board, who were compelled to fire on the prisoners before they could be got under. Having done all in our power to pacify the men, who were mostly in a state of intoxication, we proceeded on board the French Commodore's ship, where we were told the same story. We did not quit the ship, however, without informing the Frenchman that we should take care to have the business investigated, and, I believe, left them not a little alarmed. The true state of the case was, as far as we could learn, that, immediately after the British flag was hoisted, the French gave the prisoners their liberty, and allowed them to get at the spirits; upon which having, very naturally, got drunk, they rose upon the guard and disarmed them, but without proceeding any further. This was made an excuse by the French for giving vent to the hatred which they bear to the English, whom they fired at through the ports and down the hatches, while in a defenceless state. We reported the business to the

proper authorities; but I regret to state that no effectual steps were taken, as far as we could learn, to obtain satisfaction for this cruel outrage upon our poor defenceless tars.

Excepting in the advantage it possesses in two good ports, the Isle of France is in every respect inferior to the Island of Bourbon. Its productions are nearly the same as those of the latter island, but much inferior as to quantity and quality. I saw but little, having remained there but a short time after the capture. I rode out to see the Governor's country-house, which is a charming spot, with gardens and pleasure grounds laid out quite in the English style.

The town of Port Louis is handsome, well built, and of considerable size. Excepting the Government-house, the Barracks, and some of the principal public buildings, it is almost entirely composed of wood. The dock-yard is extensive. The port is a very excellent one, and well protected by batteries from any attack by sea; but the defences of the town on the land sides are by no means formidable.

The remarks I have made on the inhabitants of the Island of Bourbon apply equally to those of the Isle of France, as far as regards the natives or Creoles: but the society of Port Louis (which they call a *petit Paris*) would be highly offended at being compared with their brethren on the subordinate island.

It was a disgrace to our Government that the Island had not been attacked fifteen years before. Had it been taken at that time, what sums would have been saved to the nation, and to the East India Company in particular, whose trade suffered so much from the squadron which harboured there. While the ports of the mother country were completely blockaded, this remote island managed to equip and keep afloat a squadron, which, while it did incalculable mischief to our commerce, supported the national flag with greater honour than it could boast of in any other quarter.

A few days after the surrender, the French troops embarked for their own country on board some of our

transports. From the quantity of baggage which they took with them, I am sure that it could not have been all private property.

Having my choice given me to remain at the Isle of France as chief engineer, or to return to Madras to accompany the expedition fitting out against the Island of Java, I preferred the latter; and having a passage offered me by Captain Rennie, I embarked about the middle of December, on board his Majesty's sloop Hecate, bound for Madras. In the beginning of January, 1811, I reached Madras, where I found the expedition already preparing against the Island of Java; and shortly afterwards I was, in consideration of my humble services at the Isles of France and Bourbon, appointed an extra aid-de-camp to Sir Samuel Auchmuty, who was to command the forces on that occasion, and who wished to have on his staff an officer from each branch of the service. I lost no time, therefore, in getting myself boiled, or, in other words, exchanging my blue coat with a solitary epaulette for a red coat with two. And I must say, however my brethren of the *shell* tribe may complain of the process by which they change their colour, that I did not feel myself at all in *hot water* on the occasion. On the contrary, I felt highly flattered by the compliment, not considering myself at all in the light of a major-domo, head-carver, or wine-drinker with subalterns, (in which dignified offices aids-de-camp are but too often employed, being, in fact, more aids de *table* than aids de *camp*,) but as an engineer officer, at hand to be employed on any emergency, or to be consulted on any point regarding my profession. With this impression I entered on my new office, predetermined to preserve my own opinion, with all due deference to my superior, to partake of the *long bouchon* whenever it made its appearance at table, and neither to laugh at the General's jokes, nor to praise his wine, unless I relished them. How long I should have persevered in this laudable resolution, which I believe is often made and often broken, or whether I should have yielded to the law of necessity, or to the contagion of example, I cannot pretend to say; but,

fortunately for me perhaps, I did not remain long enough in the situation to have my principles put to the test.

Although I had generally been well received in society at Madras, yet, when I came to mount the aid-de-camp's coat, I observed many persons eye me with a degree of consideration which I never could obtain from them when in the garb of a simple subaltern of engineers. Many a cordial greeting did I now receive, where once a simple nod was thought sufficient, and many a whole handful of fingers would now be thrust into my palm, where formerly a couple of digets at most were brought forth to balance my five. This respect and attention paid to my new coat was not confined to the male sex; so that, however I might have benefited, in many respects by the change, my *amour propre* was not much flattered, nor my estimation of mankind much raised, by the little peep into the human heart which I had thus obtained. In every society there will always be a certain number of low-minded persons, who pay no respect but to rank or riches. One family I recollect in particular at the Presidency, which was so notorious in this respect that a trick which was played them by a captain of the navy, whom they had offended, afforded considerable amusement, if not gratification, to the greater part of the Settlement. Expecting to meet this family at the assembly-rooms, he brought a young midshipman ashore with him, and introduced him as the *Honourable* Mr. so and so. As he anticipated, the bait took, and a set was immediately made at this sprig of nobility, by the party in question. The daughters monopolized him as a partner during the evening. His dancing was admired, his face pronounced truly patrician, his manners considered superior, and even his *gaucheries* set down as the *veritable ton*. They begged as a favour that the Captain would allow him to stay ashore with them for a short time—they would take such care of him. To which the Captain, after some demur, for " he was given into his special charge," consented. The next day Middy is taken round to see the lions, and to be introduced to their most fashionable acquaintance. His cocked hat is rather the worse for a

sea voyage, and his dirk is grown shabby: they stop at the Europe shops, and new ones are presented to him by the hands of the young ladies. A ball is given on purpose for him. In short, every possible attention is paid to the little *honourable*, whose noble parents will doubtless seek out the family on its return to England, to repay the obligation; and already had they begun to anticipate the pleasure which they should enjoy at the Countess' fashionable parties, and the advantages they should derive from being introduced into the *beau monde*, through the means of her ladyship. In fact, Middy was in clover. To be obliged to part with their young friend at last was painful. It cost the fair members of the family some tears, and gained Middy some caresses, and, what was of more value, some substantial tokens of friendship; and fame went so far as to say that he carried away a lock of hair belonging to one of the young ladies. Nor did they part without mutual promises to renew the acquaintance in England. The next day, as the ship was about to sail, the master, a gruff, tobacco-chewing tar, waited upon the family, to thank them for their kindness to his son. Conceive their astonishment! Not long afterwards they took their passage for England; not, certainly, to renew their acquaintance with their *honourable* guest and his noble parents, though, as was shrewdly suspected, to escape the ridicule with which this story had covered them.

END OF VOL. I.